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EDITORIAL

REALISM ON AIDS

The recent decision by New York State officials to allow small-scale, experimental distribution of sterile needles to intravenous drug addicts in New York City as a way of combating AIDS is a victory for common sense and compassion. For too long, American public policy on drugs and sex has been controlled by those who prefer dead addicts and pregnant teen-agers to prevention programs that accept human behavior as it is rather than as they would like it to be.

The administration of Governor Mario Cuomo has apparently decided that doing something about AIDS is more important than avoiding charges by the church, the law-enforcement community and the Reaganites that it is soft on drugs.

Still, New York State Health Commissioner Dr. David Axelrod is politically cautious. The program will reach only a small number of addicts in a few neighborhoods. While the experiment proceeds, tens of thousands will become infected by contaminated needles. And according to news reports, Axelrod and the Governor were influenced by the recent finding that one in every sixty-one babies born in New York City carries AIDS antibodies. It ought to be possible to take measures to curb an epidemic without hiding behind babies.

In Europe, free needle distribution has become part of the attack on AIDS [see William Schwartz, "Drug Addicts With Dirty Needles," *The Nation*, June 20, 1987]. The United States will have to follow suit. If we are serious about stopping AIDS, we will have to legalize drugs in order to improve the health of addicts. We will also need family planning clinics in schools, education about safe sex and a reversal of the government's refusal to let publicly funded clinics counsel HIV-positive women about abortion. The conservative fantasy of how people ought to behave is not worth dying for.

THE GUNS OF FEBRUARY
Andrew Kopkind

THE F.B.I.'S OLD TRICKS
Diana Gordon

LETTER FROM ISRAEL
Micah L. Sifry

NEW POVERTY DEBATE
Jefferson Morley

THE COURAGE OF OSCAR WILDE
Ed Cohen

THE PRESS BARONIES
Richard Pollak

ILLNESS AND HYPOCRISY

CAN RUPERT MURDOCH HAVE IT ALL?

SAMUEL A. SIMON AND DAVID WAGENHAUSER

G'day, mate. Well, perhaps not for Rupert Murdoch, the politically conservative multibillion-dollar media magnate who may soon find himself in a very unfamiliar position—a losing one.

The Australian-born Murdoch (who became an American citizen for business purposes) has suddenly found that his stories of two-headed monsters and pictures of decapitated women have taken a back page to his own front-page caricature. Ironically, the newspapers, columnists, Senators and liberals suddenly have come not to bury Caesar but to martyr him.

Murdoch's woes stem from his 1986 purchase of WNYW-TV in New York City, now the flagship of his Fox Broadcasting Company network, and WFXT-TV in Boston. A thirteen-year-old Federal Communications Commission rule prohibits media cross-ownership (holding a daily newspaper and a radio or television station in the same community, unless they were bought prior to the rule's adoption), and Murdoch owned the *New York Post* and the *Boston Herald* at the time he contracted to purchase the television stations. In order to get F.C.C. approval of his television station acquisitions he had to promise to sell the two newspapers.

In 1985, when Murdoch first proposed to acquire the two television properties, he was challenged by public interest groups, in part out of fear that he would figure out a way to retain ownership of both the newspaper and television properties. Murdoch, in fact, had a reputation overseas of working to change government regulations that impeded his business ventures—

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LETTERS.

SAVAGE SCHOLARSHIP

Oxford, Ohio

Since Nathan Glazer has made public in the December 26, 1987, issue of *The Nation* ["Letters"] his views on my 1983 tenure case, I would like to clarify further some issues surrounding both his recent comments and his role in that review process. I was not persuaded by Glazer's suggestion that he was merely performing the role of the impartial tenure reviewer. His review was more than a savage political attack, as Russell Jacoby points out; it was a mockery of scholarly procedure and it raises a number of questions regarding his own intellectual honesty.

At the time, John Silber, the president of Boston University, needed some critical commentaries to counter the positive endorsements I had received at all of the major university tenure-review levels (including the dean of the School of Education, who announced publicly that he would resign if I didn't get tenure). Silber chose, among others, Chester Finn and Nathan Glazer to provide such a commentary. Finn and Glazer worked together at Harvard University, and their selection by Silber was indicative of his own ideological leanings in my case. The ideological attack that Finn presented bordered on the irrelevant, i.e., I was not a historian, I didn't get my undergraduate degree at the right schools, and so forth. But Glazer's letter, in my mind, was shameful. Glazer approached my work with such a degree of seriousness that he started off his review by getting my name wrong. He wrote, "I have reviewed all of the materials you have sent me on *Robert* Giroux" (my emphasis). It got worse.

Silber's office sent Glazer forty of my published articles, two edited books, two history curriculum texts and two books, one of which had been published by Temple University Press and another in manuscript form that was in the process of being published by Bergin and Garvey, and Routledge and Kegan Paul. It is worth noting that both books were named by the American Educational Studies Association as outstanding books in education for the respective years in which they were published. True to form, Glazer simplified his task by developing his review around a collection of sentences and phrases taken from pages 6, 52, 53 and 55 of *Ideology, Culture, and the Process of Schooling*; he wrote a paragraph of commentary on my history texts, ignored my published articles altogether and added in the form of a postscript a commentary on *Theory and Resistance in Education*, noting that he had read the latter book hastily. In large part, Glazer's review was a strident polemic against scholars working in the critical tradition, a defense of a history text in education that he had written at the time and a demeaning attack on students at Boston University, who had rated my teaching quite highly. His commentary attracted the attention of several journals and was subject to a number of criticisms.

Professor Glazer was far from impartial. I do not want to suggest that Glazer reduced himself to the role of an ideological hack in this affair, but I don't think I would be stretching the point in claiming that he provided in a dutiful manner what has become an established service for John Silber.

Henry A. Giroux

POUND DEVALUED

New York City

Strange days, when a member of *The Nation*'s masthead declares that the expression of certain opinions should be punishable by death.

Thomas M. Disch, reviewing a performance of Ezra Pound's *Elektra* [Jan. 23], writes, "I've always thought Pound deserved the death penalty," but, due to the "incontestable merits" of the play—he might have added other important postwar works, such as the last four volumes of the *Cantos* and the *Confucian Odes*—he now finds himself "retroactively relenting." Well, thanks!

Pound was an obsessive anti-Semite, an enthusiastic supporter of Mussolini and an occasional admirer of Hitler. His activities on behalf of Italian Fascism, however, consisted entirely of a series of rambling speeches he delivered over the Rome radio. It is unclear who, if anyone, heard those broadcasts, and the speeches are generally impossible to follow unless one is thoroughly familiar with the Pound cosmos: Confucius, the Malatestas, Major Douglas, Gaudier-Brzeska and so on. He was hardly Tokyo Rose. Pound undoubtedly hoped for a Fascist Europe, but his position on America was isolationist—a position curiously shared, for opposite reasons, by the Trotskyites at *Partisan Review*, as Marjorie Perloff has recently pointed out in *The Quarterly*.

Contrary to Disch, the greatness of Pound's writing before or after the war is irrelevant to his "crimes" or possible punishment. The case must be based solely on the radio broadcasts, and there is no conceivable way that those speeches, no matter how reprehensible, resulted in the death or injury of anyone. Pound was one of the more ineffectual of the many writers and artists who supported Fascism—or, for that matter, of those who have cheered on their local despots over the centuries. Would Disch kill them all? To consider Pound a war criminal deserving capital punishment, equal to an Eichmann or a Mengele, is not only a cheapening of the real monstrosities of that war—it's totalitarianism with a liberal smile. What other societies murder their crackpots?

Eliot Weinberger

DISCH REPLIES

New York City

Whether Pound's wartime broadcasts from Rome constituted treason will always remain a moot point, since Pound was able to avoid prosecution by his pretense of insanity. Whether his broadcasts were effective, or as successfully lethal as the hands-on atrocities of Eichmann et al., the irreducible, guilty fact remains that he aided and abetted the enemy, urging Americans not to fight against the Axis powers. Nor did he do so in terms as arcane as Eliot Weinberger suggests. Interested readers can find a sample of the Rome broadcasts in *"Ezra Pound Speaking": Radio Speeches of World War II*, and it takes no familiarity with "the Pound cosmos" to get the drift of such a representative peroration as this: "But that any sub-Jew in the White House should send American lads to die for their Jewsoons and Sassoons, the private interest of the skum of the English earth, and the still lower dregs of the Parsee and levantine importations is an outrage." If you were an American lad drafted into the Army, wouldn't that sound like a summons to desertion?

As to whether Pound should have received the death penalty or only life imprisonment for his crimes, were he to have been found guilty, imagination must be the judge. Pound, for all the passionate self-pity evidenced in the *Cantos* and in his *Elektra*, remained an unrepentant Fascist to the end, convinced the wrong side had won the war. He might well, like the Socrates portrayed by I.F. Stone, have disdained the "free-speech" defense advanced on his behalf by Weinberger. In any case, he was spared the need to defend his actions by those who arranged for his comfy incarceration at St. Elizabeth's, and the thrust of my gibe that so offended Weinberger was directed more against those who assisted in Pound's imposture than against Pound himself, whose guilt seems to me incontrovertible. If Pound's treasonable actions are to be excused as those of a mere crackpot, then any crime that is not motivated by a lucid view of one's own best interests might be similarly thrown out of court.

Thomas M. Disch

CALLING ALL STUDENT ARTISTS

The Nation is looking for original student art/cartoons commenting on college student activism and culture for a special issue to be published this spring. Please send all submissions no later than February 29 (enclose SASE) to Box S, *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

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EDITORIALS.

Don't Quit, Ed

As Yale Law School Professor Alexander Bickel once put it, for the nation's chief law-enforcement officer, the law and the canons of professional ethics provide minimal standards of conduct only. That is because the Attorney General of the United States is the "keeper of the executive conscience."

Last week, the keeper of the Reagan Administration's conscience, Edwin Meese 3d, couldn't recall whether he read the key portion of a 1985 memorandum that allegedly explored the possibility of bribing Israeli officials in return for their promise not to attack a proposed Iraqi-Jordanian oil pipeline. Perhaps Meese forgot because in 1985 he was preoccupied with dissociating himself from a check for $300,000 that his friend of thirty years, E. Robert Wallach, received from Wedtech, a small military contractor in the Bronx, New York. Wallach claimed that the payment was for legal advice, but according to U.S. Attorney Rudolph Giuliani, the money was for "future services, including efforts to influence Edwin Meese and other Federal officials." Meese has admitted that, at Wallach's urging, he helped Wedtech get a "fair hearing" on a $32 million Army engine contract in 1982. He could not recall, however, ordering a highly unusual meeting at the White House on Wedtech's bid, the result of which was that the tiny, unknown company was awarded a hefty contract.

Of course, Meese's recollection of his interventions on behalf of Wedtech in 1982 could have been hazy because at

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the time he was preoccupied with explaining his failure to comply with the Ethics in Government Act in 1981. Meese finally said that he had "inadvertently" forgotten to list on a financial disclosure form a $15,000 interest-free loan from Edwin Thomas, a longtime friend who was appointed to be his deputy in the White House. Technically, the loan was made to Meese's wife, and besides, Thomas's wife also got a Federal job, as indeed did their son Tad, so it's not surprising that Meese had trouble sorting out what went on.

Well, we inadvertently forgot to mention Meese's neglect to mention, on a 1985 financial disclosure form, a "limited blind partnership" he had entered into with W. Franklyn Chinn (on the advice of Wallach), who was a director at Wedtech, but never mind. The point is that the Attorney General's various alleged conflicts of interest and the special prosecutors investigating them have practically immobilized the nation's chief law officer, necessitating that he delegate a number of important decisions to others. His legal troubles, along with the prospect that he may soon be testifying as a defendant rather than as a defense witness for Michael Deaver, Lyn Nofziger and other of Reagan's California pals, have provoked calls for his resignation.

We refuse to join the pack. The fix Meese is in is poetic justice. Here is a law-and-order Attorney General who has been fending off investigators almost since he took office. Meese is a symbol of the hypocrisy of this Administration, which has been the sleaziest since Ulysses S. Grant's and has fiddled more laws than Ivan Boesky. He epitomizes its prevailing attitude that national office is not a public trust but a private trove. There is an added dividend from his legal travails: They leave him no time to carry on his crusade to restore the Constitution to its pristine 1789 state and discard the Bill of Rights altogether.

Guns of February

Concord, New Hampshire

Nothing brings out the beast beneath the fair skin and mild manners of Republicans better than a crowd of heavily armed and politically dangerous Gun Owners of New Hampshire. It's a raucous audience that seems to be abstracted from the bleachers of *The Morton Downey Jr. Show* and placed in a Munich beer hall, and I don't mean during Oktoberfest. It can turn wimps into warriors and country-clubbers into storm troopers. GO–New Hampshire, an affiliate of the National Rifle Association, brought its battalions together for the first of these forums eight years ago, just before the New Hampshire primary—an event that set the tone not only for the Republican campaign but, in a way, for the long, dark night of Reaganism. Candidate Ronald Reagan, seated next to the perennially loony Lyndon LaRouche, won the crowd when he waved his N.R.A. card. Independent John Anderson was practically driven from the room when he spoke for gun control. And John Connally electrified the riflemen when he shouted that Americans not only have the right to bear arms but the *duty* to carry guns.

There was a whiff of *putsch* in the air this year when GO–New Hampshire restaged its lethal-weapons night, but candidates who might be expected to draw fire for their pacifist ways wisely stayed away. Albert Gore Jr., alone among the Democrats, had agreed to attend, and a card with his name was placed at the speakers' table. But although Gore is determined to court weapons-grade voters in the South, he is apparently worried about his image among more moderate Democrats in the Northeast (he's hoping for modest successes in New Hampshire and Massachusetts) and never showed. He did get a share of boos when the M.C. ticked off the roster of cowards who refused the invitation, but not so loud a chorus of contempt as that given to Michael Dukakis, the current whipping boy, or to Ted Kennedy, who declined to appear in 1980 (for obvious reasons) and still has the gall to sponsor gun-control legislation in Congress.

"Do you want to know my idea of gun control?" Jack Kemp asked the audience. He leaned against the podium, lowered his head, beaded his eyes and answered his own question slowly: "A steady aim." A sustained roar went up. An advance man for another candidate shuddered slightly. "Look at them throw raw meat to the lions," he said.

Kemp is making a major push in the last days of the primary campaign as the favorite son of the activist Republican right. He needs a second-place showing here (and a good third in Iowa) to stay in the race, and he is playing tough and a little dirty. He has abandoned the style of a section-man in an economics seminar for the tactics of a *contra* in the jungle. His target is not poll-leading George Bush but second banana Bob Dole, who has been unable to reproduce his Iowa popularity in New Hampshire. Midwesterner Dole goes over well in the economically distraught and culturally ignored heartland, but in booming New England he is trailing Bush badly. Objectively, at least, Kemp is hatcheting the minority leader for the Vice President; the payoff at convention time could be a Bush-Kemp ticket. The Kemp campaign sent out scare mail to thousands of senior citizens, in brown envelopes deceptively simulating Social Security communications. The letters suggested that Dole wanted to cut benefits while Kemp alone promised to protect their pensions. Dole and his state chair, Senator Warren Rudman, spend considerable time replying to Kemp, but the tactic seems to be working.

Dole looks at loose ends. His aides send him on long lonely rides to cost-ineffective appearances. With only a few weeks to go, he was still doing house parties with thirty-five guests and talking to teen-agers, most of whom can't vote, at posh St. Paul's School. Perhaps he needs to express Republican solidarity with the prep-school class, having failed to make a hit with the "gunnies," but he has yet to find his natural base here.

Bush, unaccountably, continues to soar. He travels royally in traffic-jamming motorcades with a medi-van and a sea of bodyguards. He avoids the press (especially since Rathergate) and puts on his best imitation of a presidential air. From the back of the hall he looks like a cartoon candidate, a joke version of a President. But maybe that's what most Republicans here have come to expect. When his

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turn came to speak in the GO-New Hampshire forum, he counted all the guns he owns and talked about quail-hunting in Texas. *Quail?* Then he reached into the breast pocket of his well-tailored suit and produced a tiny plastic gun, not much bigger than a toy in a Cracker Jack box, which he said could kill an airplane pilot. He'd like to ban such exotic weapons until they can be made "detectable" at airport security stops. He waved the little war-toy in the air and pointed it at the audience, and then his own head. Bang, bang! Who's dead?

ANDREW KOPKIND

Old F.B.I. Tricks

With depressing frequency the "Federal Bureau of Intimidation" lives up to its nickname. Now we have the F.B.I. harassing a black agent, spying on anti-interventionist organizations and finding nothing amiss. "The system works," said Director William Sessions last week.

Sessions insists that the racial persecution of black F.B.I. agent Donald Rochon—defacing pictures of his family and threatening him with death and mutilation—does not reflect systemic racism within the Bureau. But from the head of the Omaha office, where the humiliation of Rochon began, to Edwin Sharp, the Assistant Director of the F.B.I., who is named as a defendant in Rochon's lawsuit, the F.B.I. brass condoned and therefore encouraged the brutality.

Clearly the F.B.I. of the 1980s has not yet fully rejected J. Edgar Hoover's legacy of blatant bias and routine insensitivity to blacks. Early in his career Hoover destroyed Marcus Garvey and his black nationalist movement. He nearly succeeded in destroying the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. He dragged his heels on investigating civil rights violations. According to Hoover biographer Richard Gid Powers, the only blacks in the Bureau until 1962 were the Director's personal servants, and Bureau employees referred to blacks in general as "niggers."

The Bureau's record on political intelligence is equally dismal. It has hounded and tracked dissidents from the days of the Palmer raids in 1919, through the Cointelpro campaign of the 1950s and 1960s and the surveillance of anti-Vietnam War activities in the 1970s. Now it claims that collecting political intelligence on hundreds of groups opposed to U.S. policy in Central America was part of a legitimate investigation of the terrorist connections of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES). Only a sketchy picture of that investigation emerges from the heavily censored documents released January 27 by the Bureau, pursuant to a Freedom of Information Act request filed two years ago, and a subsequent lawsuit, by the Center for Constitutional Rights (C.C.R.). Even so, it is immediately apparent that the sweep of the investigation was far too broad to support Sessions' contention that no political motivation existed. The probe covered universities, churches and social service organizations. Agents photographed people exercising their legal right to protest and recorded and distributed license plate numbers of cars parked near demonstrations. Yet, after four years the Bureau did not come up with a single charge of terrorism.

The F.B.I. appears incapable of heeding, on its own, the phrases in the Constitution relating to equal protection, due process and freedom of speech. The problem has its roots not only in the Bureau's history but also in the contradictions of its institutional roles. Wedded to their mission of control and order, police agencies—the F.B.I. most of all—are also asked to honor and enforce what Chief Justice Earl Warren called "the evolving standards of a maturing society."

Our watchdog institutions insure compliance with those standards only in theory. Clues to the F.B.I. spying of the 1980s have been surfacing for more than a year—the left press and the Movement Support Network of the C.C.R. reported it regularly—yet the Congressional oversight committees failed to conduct a thorough investigation.

It's time to change the rules of the oversight game played by the national police and intelligence agencies and the Congressional committees that are supposed to monitor them. For too long the shared assumption of the watched and the watchers has been that the agencies are doing the committees a favor by allowing cursory examinations of policy and practice. Former F.B.I. Director William Webster personally revived the CISPES investigation in Phoenix even after it failed to turn up criminal conduct, writing in a memorandum to the special agent in charge of that office that the Tucson Committee for Human Rights could be "a front organization for the CISPES." The appalling racial environment of the Bureau's Omaha and Chicago offices flourished on his watch. This magazine recommended that the senators question Webster about investigations of groups like CISPES at the confirmation hearings on his nomination as Director of Central Intelligence [see editorial, "Webster's Third?" March 21, 1987]. Had they done so, perhaps these abuses would have been dealt with then.

Now that the CISPES story has emerged, a more aggressive Congress and press could be especially effective in focusing the public spotlight on other Bureau excesses. They could probe the sworn statement in which Atlanta lawyer and businessman Hirsch Friedman says it was "an 'unofficial' policy of the F.B.I." to investigate black city officials on the theory (called "Frühmenschen" [primitive man], according to the affidavit) that blacks are too primitive to run things. They should demand F.B.I. answers to former F.B.I. informant Frank Varelli's allegation that the Bureau spied on public officials (including House Speaker Jim Wright) when they met with Central American groups.

Most important, they should challenge Reagan's Executive Order 12333 and the looser guidelines for domestic security and international terrorist investigations it established. Taken together, those have lowered standards governing the scope and tactics of F.B.I. surveillance. They constitute the license to spy that supports Sessions' apologia.

DIANA GORDON

Diana Gordon teaches political science and criminology at the Center for Worker Education of the City College of New York.

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

Family Feelings

Preparing to defend my father's reputation from slur, I was interested to come across, very belatedly, a short and graceful essay in honor of her mother by my sister Sarah, who writes excellent detective novels under the name Sarah Caudwell. Sarah's mother was my father's second wife, Jean Ross (I am a consequence of his third marriage, to Patricia). Jean and Claud had met in Berlin in the early 1930s, in the era portrayed by Christopher Isherwood in such pieces as *Goodbye to Berlin*, in which Jean had always been described, by Isherwood among others, as a model for the character Sally Bowles.

It was this fictional presentation that my sister disputed in the *New Statesman* for October 3, 1986. The occasion was a revival of *Cabaret*, itself derived from the Isherwood story, and an attendant insinuation, remotely taken from Isherwood's schoolboyish speculation in *Christopher and His Kind*, that Jean had performed louchely on the stage of the Berlin Opera.

Jean, wrote my sister, "never liked *Goodbye to Berlin*, nor felt any sense of identity with the character of Sally Bowles, which in many respects she thought more closely modeled on one of Isherwood's male friends. (His homosexuality could not at that time be openly admitted.)" Sarah then argued that the significant differences between Sally and her supposed model are attributable to Isherwood's preference for convention over reality:

> The convention does not permit an attractive young woman to have much in the way of intellectual accomplishments, and Isherwood follows it loyally. There is nothing in his portrait of Sally to suggest that she might have had any genuine ability as an actress, still less as a writer. My mother, on the other hand, was at least talented enough as an actress to be cast as Anitra in Max Reinhardt's production of *Pier Gynt* and competent enough as a writer to earn her living, not long afterwards, as a scenario-writer and journalist. . . .
>
> Above all, the convention requires that a woman must be either virtuous (in the sexual sense) or a tart. So Sally, who is plainly not virtuous, must be a tart.

But at the fictional level convention and reality are at odds here, since Sally is simply not the "demimondaine" Isherwood invokes, and on the biographical level, as Sarah wrote:

> To depend for a living on providing sexual pleasure, whether or not in the context of marriage, seemed to [Jean] the ultimate denial of freedom and emancipation. The idea so deeply repelled her that she simply could not, I think, have been attracted to a man who was rich, or allied herself permanently to anyone less incorrigibly impecunious than my father. She did not see the question as one of personal morality, but as a political one.

I was able to tell Sarah when I saw her recently in London that just as her mother had been the subject of caricature and lies, so too had her father. A lengthy attack on myself by Henry Fairlie, published in *The New Republic* for December 28, 1987, began with a paragraph claiming that my father, Claud, had fabricated reports when he was one of the London *Times*'s correspondents in this country at the time of the Crash and the onset of the Great Depression. Indignant at this libel I was interested to hear from my colleague Christopher Hitchens of a fortuitous encounter with Fairlie at a Christmas lunch in Washington. As they both anticipated the feast, Hitchens asked Fairlie for his source for the claim of fabrication from the United States. "I have documentary evidence," Fairlie announced, then said that this evidence was none other than the official history of *The Times*. A moment's reflection tells one that it is highly unlikely, even if the story were true, that an official history of any paper, let alone *The Times*, would divulge that its readers had been offered bogus reports. There is of course no such documentary evidence in *The History of the Times*.

Hardly had Fairlie returned, cheeks aflame with Yuletide cheer, to his fragrant lair in the offices of *The New Republic*, than a letter arrived on the premises and was duly scrutinized by that periodical's "editors," meaning the ephebes and helots who attend to the whims of their master Peretz. It was from my father's first wife, the writer Hope Hale Davis, to whom he was married during his years in the United States. I shall quote it in full:

> To the Editor:
>
> Belated as I was in catching up with the Dec. 28 issue, I must protest the shockingly false statement that opens Henry Fairlie's review of *Corruptions of Empire* by Alexander Cockburn. Fairlie says that Claud Cockburn as London *Times* correspondent in New York sent in "reports that were total fabrications, which the *Times*, trusting its correspondent, naturally printed."
>
> The absurdity of this statement should be obvious. A junior correspondent could not possibly have got away with any such trick, supposing he had been inclined. But Claud was far from inclined. I know this, having been his wife and completely in his confidence during this period, the early thirties. He was in fact developing my political thinking along with his own. He felt increasingly that some day he must leave the *Times* and help in the revolution he saw coming. But he was still a product of his period and upbringing, governed by the gentleman's code of honor his father had instilled in him. As a writer he was devoted to truth in the generally accepted sense.
>
> Whatever change occurred in these values took place after he became a Communist, as it must for any member of the Party. But at the time any idea of playing tricks on his job would never have occurred to him. It would have violated all his principles and purposes. For one thing, he would never have betrayed the trust of his New York chief, Louis Hinrichs, whom he loved and revered, who had taken a warm fatherly interest in developing his career. Besides being grateful, Claud had a tenderly protective feeling for Hinrichs as someone slightly naive, unaware of the shape of the future. It would have been as unthinkable to hurt him as to hurt a child.
>
> In a different way Claud was almost as fond of the Washington correspondent, Sir Wilmott Lewis, who shared his contacts and taught him the complex ins and outs of Capital reporting. Taking his place during the summer Claud

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would not have dreamed of sending in dispatches that might damage Lewis's reputation. Which did not mean that he whitewashed such accounts as of the Bonus March of 1932. His long report of this (published in full by the *Times*) was revolutionary in effect, but it was the truth that was revolutionary, and Claud was quite content with that.

I have a letter from Geoffrey Dawson, editor of the *Times*, begging Claud to reconsider his decision to leave, and calling his work "an unqualified success." In turn Claud was deeply appreciative of the training and opportunities he had been given, and he could say honestly that he had been truly happy there. But he felt he must use his talents to guide the coming changes. Still, though his sense of mischief played a part in this desire, his sense of what the revolution would mean was still fairly vague and (though he would not have tolerated the word) idealistic. He genuinely tried to be what he once very soberly told me every man should be, "un homme serieux."

Yours very sincerely,
Hope Hale Davis

This admirable letter was joined a couple of weeks later at *The New Republic* by a short note from myself, saying it was no disgrace to be vilified by someone ignorant enough to believe, as the fuddled Fairlie had proposed in his review, that Alcide De Gasperi was a socialist, and asking Fairlie to provide his sources for the libel. That appeared in the issue dated February 8, with an answer from Fairlie conceding his "slip" about De Gasperi (which was on the order of calling Truman a Republican) and concluding with these scholarly citations:

> My sources for saying that Claud Cockburn fabricated some stories—not all, of course—when he was correspondent for the *Times* of London in America are: his own frequent boasts in my company and that of other journalists that he had done so and got them in the *Times*; the confirmation of some British journalists who had been in America with him; and, during my own years on the *Times*, the fact that this was part of the lore of the office. I agree there is no written, conclusive evidence that my accusation is correct. But since Claud Cockburn admitted in print that he had fabricated stories from Spain during the Civil War, it is not surprising that one accepted his own word for the fact that he had done the same from America.

Discovering that her letter had not been published along with mine, Hope then telephoned her acquaintance Peretz to ask about its fate. He said that letters were not his department but that he would get back to her. By a curious coincidence he made the claim that letters were not within his editorial purview at just about the time one of the above-mentioned ephebes or helots was explaining to a friend of Edward Said that he could not confirm whether a letter, supportive of Said against slurs made by Leon Wieseltier, would run, because such decisions were in the hands of Peretz. Hope never did hear back from Peretz, but instead received a letter from Leona Hiraoka Roth, copy editor, thanking her for the "valuable" letter, which "has not gone unheeded" (though of course it did go unpublished), and saying that the magazine would be running my letter in my father's "defense."

To complete the file of materials on this subject unpublished by *The New Republic*, I now add this letter from Christopher Hitchens:

> To the editors:
>
> In his rather hasty reply to Alexander Cockburn's challenge (February 8) Henry Fairlie relies entirely upon hearsay for his assertion that Claud Cockburn fabricated his American dispatches to the London *Times*. Well, on December 25 last, I *heard* Fairlie *say*, in the presence of witnesses, that he had "documentary evidence" for the charge. Since he has not chosen to present this evidence, can he at least tell us who he means by his various attributions to "other journalists" and "some British journalists"? Can he supply one example of a fabricated dispatch? Can he make good on his nebulous claim that all this was "part of the lore of the office"? Your readers should know that Mr. Fairlie is in fact making an allegation that has never been made before. His unusual modesty, in disguising his scoop with a drizzle of unidentified corroborators, is arousing comment among those who know him. Will he not at any rate remove suspicion from the innocent among them? And, if he cannot provide us with either a named witness or a checkable and provable instance, will he perhaps have the grace to withdraw?
>
> Christopher Hitchens

For Fairlie one should, I suppose, nourish the emotions that Aristotle thought to be evoked by tragedy: pity for a broken man, evicted from his lodgings, compelled to the hospice of *The New Republic*, dependent on the charity of Peretz, degraded in his intellectual standards so much so that he is, on some accounts, writing speeches for Senator Al Gore, the candidate most esteemed by Peretz, trembling daily at the thought that next Peretz will command him to join Tipper Gore in some ceremonial bonfire of records from Prince and Mötley Crüe; fear that some kindred ghastly misfortune will one day befall oneself. Reached at his home at *The New Republic* by my colleague Kent Curtis, Fairlie denied he had invoked "documentary evidence," said of Hitchens, "I distrust him as I distrust a snake," and shortly thereafter brusquely terminated the conversation. A subsequent effort to elicit the facts of his relationship to the Gores met with a violent replacement of the receiver.

It is hard to feel compassion for a man who lied to lend symmetry to his claim that members of the Cockburn family distort the truths of American history, then falsely claimed a documentary source, then fell back on the further lie that my father, who was indeed extremely forthright on his activities as a propagandist in the Spanish Civil War, should have chosen him and him alone—a man to whom my father was in no way close—to "boast" something he had never mentioned to any of his intimates in innumerable and profuse recollections of his work in the United States. More despicable even than this contemptible liar is his patron, Peretz, who has long made it his practice to promote libelous and mendacious assaults on his enemies in the pages of *The New Republic*, then denied them the opportunity to respond while, as in the case of Hope Hale Davis, pretending that such censorship is not his responsibility.

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BELTWAY BANDITS.

DAVID CORN
JEFFERSON MORLEY

■ Silberman's Revenge

When the U.S. District Court in Washington recently struck down the law providing for a special prosecutor to investigate alleged criminal activity by high-level government officials, the judge who wrote the opinion, Laurence Silberman, may not have been a disinterested party. Silberman, you may recall, played a role in one of the central events cited by advocates of the "October surprise" theory. The theory holds that the Reagan campaign cut a deal with Iran in 1980: The mullahs were promised weapons in return for keeping the hostages until after the election, thus denying Jimmy Carter a diplomatic, and possibly electoral, victory.

Silberman acknowledges that Iran did offer Reagan an arms-for-hostages deal before the election. He was at the time an aide to Richard Allen, a top campaign official who would become Reagan's first national security adviser. In early October 1980, Silberman, Allen and Robert McFarlane, then an aide to Senator John Tower, met with an Iranian representative who made the offer. Silberman claims they turned the Iranian down, and last year all three told *The Miami Herald* they could not remember the envoy's name. In the meantime Reagan had appointed Silberman to the Federal bench.

Iran/*contra* independent counsel Lawrence Walsh is concurrently acting as a Justice Department attorney; consequently, he is unaffected by the court decision, which could lead to the extinction of the special prosecutors. Walsh may not be looking into events stretching back to 1980, but if he is, might Silberman have to appear in court on the other side of the gavel?

■ Reagan's Legacy, Part I

In this final year of the Reagan era, we can expect a tidal wave of evaluations of the President's legacy. Too many will feature a pop psychoanalysis of the national subconscious. A more down-to-earth approach has been taken by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a nonprofit research group in Washington. A few days before Reagan's State of the Union Message the center released a report on the budget for fiscal 1988. It showed that despite an agreement between the White House and Congress to preserve low-income nonentitlement programs, the total 1988 appropriations in that area fell $750 million below the amounts needed to maintain services and benefits at their 1987 levels. That's a 1.9 percent drop.

A more telling statistic is the total cut made in these programs from fiscal 1981 to 1988. After adjusting for inflation, the center determined that such spending is down 54 percent. That means there is a $44.7 billion hole in the safety net. Since 1981 housing subsidies have been cut by $32 billion, accounting for roughly three-quarters of the overall decrease. In the same period the number of homeless Americans has risen dramatically. Also slashed were job training for welfare recipients (down 81 percent), housing assistance for the elderly and handicapped (47 percent) and legal services for the poor (28 percent).

Yet another way to judge the Reagan years: The poverty rate in 1986, the latest year for which figures are available, is higher than the poverty rate for any year in the 1970s. That includes the recession of 1974-75.

■ Reagan's Legacy, Part II

The theory behind the Reagan cuts in low-income programs was that states and the munificent private sector would rush in to fill the gap. In case there is anyone who still believes that, a nationwide survey of state child-care programs, conducted by another Washington-based low-income advocacy group, the Children's Defense Fund, lays it to rest. The report compared funding of child care for low-income working families in fiscal 1987 with that in 1981 and found that twenty-two states served fewer children in 1987 than they did in 1981. Only eighteen states served more. This despite the ever-increasing need for such services. In 1986, according to C.D.F., 9.6 million preschool children had mothers in the work force; by 1995 that figure is expected to be 15 million.

"The reduction in [Federal aid] has severely hindered state governments in their efforts to provide adequate child-care programs," concludes C.D.F. president Marian Wright Edelman. "Some states have used their own money to supplement Federal funding, but not enough to offset Federal cutbacks and keep pace with the growing demand for safe, decent and affordable child care."

■ Justice Is Blind to Oversight

When it comes to tightening safety at U.S. nuclear bomb–making facilities, one might not expect the Justice Department to be the wrench in the works. Guess again. The department is opposing a proposal by Senator John Glenn that would create an independent oversight board to monitor nuclear plants.

Right now the Department of Energy, which produces nuclear weapons–grade material, is responsible for insuring health and safety at its facilities, free of any outside review. Judging by several horror stories in a Senate report on the D.O.E.'s "long history of self-regulation," the department isn't performing that task too well. Here's just one example: For ten years starting in 1974, the D.O.E.'s Portsmouth Uranium Enrichment Complex in Ohio disposed of some 50,000 gallons of radioactive waste by spreading it on the ground and tilling it into the soil.

Glenn's bill would establish a Nuclear Safety Board, with members appointed by the President. Not a part of the D.O.E. bureaucracy, the board is intended to do a better job of keeping an eye on D.O.E. bomb plants and investigating accidents. But the Justice Department says that by requiring the board's decisions to be made public, the measure "chills the deliberative process and creates public divisions." Again displaying its fondness for behind-closed-doors government, the Administration is saying, Let's keep this all in the bureaucracy.

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ARTICLES.

LETTER FROM ISRAEL

After the 'Iron Fist'—What?

MICAH L. SIFRY

Tel Aviv

Somehow, tourists still applaud when the plane touches down at Ben-Gurion International Airport. Each time I return for a visit, it seems that nothing has changed. Only this time, everything is worse. Although the *intifadeh*, the uprising, has become an enormous political and psychological victory for the Palestinians of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank *and* Israel, it has also been accompanied by the harshest Israeli response since the spring of 1982, when a dozen protesting Palestinians, including several schoolchildren, were shot and killed. And while the rebellion may yet lead to a re-evaluation among Israelis of the wisdom of ruling over another people, for the time being it has only hardened their hearts. The man responsible for what goes on in the occupied territories, Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, has become the de facto Prime Minister. It is his "iron fist" policy over the past two and a half years that has brought the Palestinians to a new pitch of suffering and anger. And now it is his declared policy of "force, might and beatings" that is being brought to bear against the uprising, with the full support of both halves of the national unity government and most of the Israeli public.

There is another path, a way to bring peace to this unhappy land, and there are still Israelis and Palestinians with the courage and vision to pursue that path. Sadly, for two peoples fighting over one land, each with deep roots in all of Eretz Israel or Palestine, the assertion of national identity by one side is viscerally interpreted by the other as an assault on its existence. And both peoples have, in living memory, suffered such assaults. Compromise is the only way out, but the daily violence of occupation and the violent assertion and suppression of identity breed their own dynamic.

The Israelis could take any number of steps to address Palestinian grievances, ease tensions and defuse the uprising. Such steps have in fact been demanded several times in the past two months by representatives of Palestinian mass organizations and elites: Rescind the deportations; release all detainees; remove troops from populated areas; stop the torture of prisoners; keep hands off the refugee camps; restrain settler vigilantism; give permits for family reunification; guarantee academic freedom, freedom of the press and freedom of association; send in United Nations observers or troops to protect the inhabitants; hold free elections. But at the bottom of every list of demands, and underpinning them, is the insistence that the Palestine Liberation Organization speaks for all Palestinians. Since the Israelis dogmatically reject any legitimization of the P.L.O.—meetings with its representatives are against the law—from Rabin on down they complain that they have no one to talk with. Thus, any list of demands is unacceptable because of what is at the bottom. And so the only course is "force, might and beatings."

Open beating of Palestinians is not a new Israeli practice, reluctantly adopted by humane occupiers unhappy with the rising death toll from shootings. Rabin announced his iron fist policy of suppressing Palestinian nationalist expression in August 1985. Deportations, which had not taken place since 1980, were resumed; nineteen Palestinians had been deported prior to the four "agitators" who were recently dumped in Southern Lebanon. Administrative detention, under which a person may be imprisoned for up to six months without charge, was also renewed. The use of live ammunition to quell demonstrations was sanctioned, according to a military directive, "as part of procedure of detention of suspects during a disturbance." Al-Haq, a Palestinian human rights and legal services organization in Ramallah, documented seventeen killings and ninety-eight woundings from the beginning of 1986 through October 1987 from this new procedure. Although Israeli troops are supposed to fire only at demonstrators' legs, al-Haq found "in over half the cases recorded, the person was shot elsewhere than in the legs."

The December riots broke out in two places that had been especially oppressed last fall, the refugee camps in and around Gaza and the Balata camp outside of Nablus, in the West Bank. For example, in mid-September, after the shooting of a boy in Balata, the camp was put under a one-day curfew. Over the next few days, soldiers entered the camp several times, searching houses, arresting residents and beating them. A 12-year-old child, still wearing bandages from a recent appendectomy, Anwar Muhammad el-Masri, told of being clubbed over the head and on the shoulders, back and legs: At one point, a soldier "put my hand on the floor and stepped on it with his boots, saying, 'I will break those hands of yours that throw stones.'" Palestinian activists sought an official investigation but none took place.

Hence, the events that triggered the riots of December occurred against a background of Israeli repression. By the time Ariel Sharon announced his provocative move into an apartment in the Arab quarter of the Old City in East Jerusalem, on December 14, the rioting had begun to spread. While Sharon and most of the Likud leadership made a special point of celebrating the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah in his new apartment, outside the Palestinians were re-enacting the tale of Judah and the Maccabees. Nearly all the Palestinian shopkeepers went on an open-ended series of commercial strikes. One day streets in Gaza were filled with stone-throwing demonstrators, the next it was the West Bank's turn. Some days, both. Nearly every day, more shootings.

After two weeks of protests, the first phase of the uprising ended with the arrest of more than 1,000 Palestinians. In two camps in the Gaza Strip all adult males were taken into custody. But the tense quiet broke after a soldier shot and killed a woman hanging out her laundry in a village near Ramallah on January 4, and after the government an-

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nounced plans to deport nine Palestinians labeled key agitators. A new wave of riots and strikes ensued. Palestinian leaders began to call for massive civil disobedience, with tactics ranging from symbolic boycotts of Israeli cigarettes to refusal to carry identification cards.

By this time, the Israeli response to the uprising—which caught the authorities totally unprepared—had begun to change. Two tactical decisions were made, aimed at reducing the number of shootings. The first was to put the most militant refugee camps under curfew, withdrawing Israeli troops from the worst flash points and using them to keep the main roads and shops open. When I visited Ramallah on January 9, this strategy was just becoming apparent. Soldiers patrolled the main streets of the town, forcing striking shop owners to open their stores, sealing some shut if the owner was absent. Several shop gates were halfway up, like thermometers measuring the temperature: They went all the way up when soldiers were approaching and back down after they disappeared. All three of the camps around Ramallah had been declared "closed military areas." At one point in mid-January, *The New York Times* reported that "more than 200,000 Palestinians were sealed in their squalid refugee centers."

The second decision was to declare openly, and in a very intimidating fashion, that, as Rabin put it, "the goal is to act against violence with punches and blows and not live ammunition." The *Jerusalem Post*'s military analyst, Joshua Brilliant, noted that the military considered this "more effective than detentions." Each detainee is supposed to be released after eighteen days if charges are not filed, and then, Brilliant continued, "he may resume stoning soldiers. But if troops break his hand, he won't be able to throw stones for a month and a half."

DRAWINGS BY PHILIP BURKE

The policy of mass arrests and beatings reflects the overwhelming tendency in Israel to see the uprising as a problem of law and order. Moreover, the statements of Israeli officials continue to reveal the callous belief that "the only language the Arab respects is force" and the naïve hope that the correct application of force will cause the territories to "return to normal." Rabin told the Knesset in early January that "we are still in the process of restoring tranquillity." The measures will no doubt have the reverse effect of stiffening Palestinian resolve.

This was apparent in the attitudes of two Palestinian teenagers from Ramallah who told me of their experience as a circle of children and adults listened, pride and determination on all their faces. In December the boys were arrested and detained, one for twelve days, the other for fifteen, in the new Dahariya prison near Hebron. For the first four days there were 136 people crammed in a 7 by 7 meter cell; the toilet, a bucket in the middle of the room. When a soldier came in, they were all supposed to stand with their heads bowed. Those not standing properly were beaten. "They made us chant slogans like 'Yes Israel, No Palestine' and 'Yes Shamir, No Arafat,' or else be beaten." About fifty of the prisoners in the cell were children, the youngest age 10. "I felt like I wasn't a human being," one of the boys recounted. "The soldiers would say things like, 'One dog is worth a thousand Palestinians.'" One of the women in the circle responded, "One Palestinian is worth more than all Israelis."

Since the official approach has been to deny the possibility that Palestinian nationalism is an indigenous, widespread phenomenon and to claim that the P.L.O. does not represent the Palestinians, the Israeli authorities have had a difficult time understanding the rebellion. B. Michael, a columnist for the Tel Aviv daily *Ha'aretz* parodied the confusion:

> The papers and learned analyses of the various commentators present the following picture: spontaneously, groups of well-organized children who lack initiative and are directed from abroad by the terrorist organizations, which, thanks to the ongoing battle waged by the security forces have not managed to penetrate the territories, and for which reason it can be established that it is none other than they who are behind these spontaneous outbreaks of unrest, in which a directing hand is clearly visible, and whose very existence reveals the failure of the PLO to gain support among the local population, which, left to its own devices is very content with life under Israeli occupation, and only out of a sense of frustration takes to the streets to create disturbances which are nothing more than a passing and continuous episode. But not civil rebellion.

In addition to rejecting any contact with representatives of Palestinian mass organizations—labor unions, women's committees, social and charitable societies, students' and teachers' unions—the Israeli authorities have also burned whatever bridges they may have had to Palestinian elites. While pledging their allegiance to the P.L.O., these Palestinians, people like Hanna Siniora, the editor of the East Jerusalem daily *Al-Fajr*, have been prominent proponents of peaceful coexistence with Israel. Siniora's efforts at the

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TIME TO DISSOCIATE FROM ISRAEL

We are Americans and Jews and we come together at this time publicly to express our strong desire to see the United States take meaningful steps to dissociate our country from the policies of Israel.

For some years we have witnessed Israel increasingly deviating from political policies that we find acceptable and from moral values that we hold dear. These developments are not the responsibility of any particular political party in Israel but rather stem, in our judgment, from a tragically misguided approach toward the Arab world in which Israel is located, a racialist ideology and a growing militancy. We can no longer condone or be associated with such Israeli behavior, nor, do we believe, should our country.

In recent years Israel has twisted away from basic commitments made at Camp David in 1978; annexed further territories, including East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, while continuing to expand settlements in all the occupied territories; and grotesquely invaded Lebanon, resulting in the death of tens of thousands of Lebanese and Palestinians as well as hundreds of Israelis and Americans, and the taking as hostages of many others.

Furthermore, Israeli policies and attitudes toward the Palestinian people have made it evident that only major changes in Israel's basic posture will allow for a peaceful political settlement with the Palestinians.

Israeli complicity in Irangate and Contragate coupled with Israel's employment of American Jews as spies against our country further underscore the growing dangers inherent in the current U.S.–Israeli relationship. The close identification in the public mind between Israel and Jews—an equation vigorously fostered by both the Zionist movement and the American Jewish lobby, which has come under its control—threatens to stigmatize Jews everywhere.

The recent acts of killings, beatings, curfews, expulsions and house arrests—all against unarmed Palestinians living in areas Israel has occupied for 20 years—further demonstrate that Israel has become a badly divided country with many unfortunate similarities to the situation that prevails in South Africa.

Our ancestors came to the United States because, as a result of their Jewishness, they were discriminated against and abused. The European experience culminated in the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust. How tragic that in our own time the very state established by Jews in the aftermath of this evil has become a place where racialism, religious discrimination, militarism and injustice prevail; and that Israel itself has become a pariah state within the world community. Events taking place today are all too reminiscent of the pogroms from which our own forefathers fled two and three generations ago—but this time those in authority are Jews and the victims are Moslem and Christian Palestinians.

We believe that Israel's course could not be maintained but for the continuing financial, political, military and covert support of the U.S. government. And we fear that unless firm steps of disengagement from Israel are taken now our country might get dragged into a major war for which preparations are under way.

In addition, we believe that unless the United States takes serious steps to distance itself from Israel the Israelis will mistakenly continue to think that the course they are on is one acceptable to the American people.

For all these reasons we believe the time has come to *normalize* the U.S. relationship with Israel. A complete re-evaluation of what has become since 1967 the American sponsorship of Israel is required. The unprecedented amounts of economic aid should be cut back over the next two to three years to much smaller levels. Furthermore, the considerable military and intelligence assistance should also be radically reduced.

Unfortunately, during the years of the Reagan Administration much the opposite course has been followed, and Israel has practically become a ward of the United States In this election year we urge an open debate about the serious problems and dangers which have resulted from the current structure of U.S.-Israeli relations. Few foreign policy issues are of such importance to our country. Consequently we urge our leading politicians to resist the widespread inhibitions from speaking up about Israel, inhibitions which result from the severe financial, political and ideological pressures often brought to bear against those who do.

We further believe that the time is overdue for negotiations between the Israeli government and the PLO, which is quite clearly the chosen representative for the great majority of Palestinians—negotiations that should quickly lead to a Palestinian state in the occupied territories and reasonable security guarantees for all parties. In the security guarantees we think our country should participate; but no longer in the financing and supporting of the kinds of policies Israel has been pursuing. The continual oppression and denial of the Palestinians of their right to self-determination is an injustice which has become intolerable not only to those demonstrating for their freedom in Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza and throughout Israel itself.

The citizens of Israel, of course, will ultimately choose their own country's destiny. But at the very least the citizens of the United States should stop financing and supporting policies that are contrary to the principles and values we hold precious as Americans and as Jews.

PLEASE JOIN US

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We hope many American Jews will take this opportunity to register their disapproval of both Israeli policies and excessive American support for Israel. Upon receiving your name and/or contribution you will be contacted by one of the original signers whose names are below. For information: (202) 362-2096.

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end of December and beginning of January to build a nonviolent civil disobedience campaign were actively disrupted. Rabin branded him a "P.L.O. agent," after which Siniora was arrested, along with nine other leading figures, including the head of the Gaza lawyers' union, Faez Abu Rahme, on January 14. The arrest of Siniora and Abu Rahme is significant because back in 1985, when Prime Minister Shimon Peres was engaged in delicate diplomacy with King Hussein and Yasir Arafat over the possible composition of a Jordanian-Palestinian negotiating team, the two men had been nominated by Arafat and accepted by Peres as potential representatives of the Palestinians. Their arrest marks the death, if there was any life left, of Peres's "Jordanian option."

Palestinians are now asking themselves, What next? The uprising has been successful at several levels. Perhaps the psychological victory has been most important. A reversal of the balance of intimidation has, at least temporarily, taken place. (Shamir recently acknowledged that the "barrier of fear" had been "shattered," and said that "our task now is to recreate that barrier and once again put the fear of death into the Arabs of the areas so as to deter them from attacking us anymore.") The cost of the occupation to Israel has been raised, as well. Although the commercial strikes and work stoppages that have accompanied the street riots have taken a large bite out of Palestinian incomes, they have, according to an Israeli Army survey, cost the Israeli economy $40 million to $50 million. And that does not include the cost of calling up extra Israeli soldiers for reserve duty in the territories.

Proposals for more wide-ranging forms of civil disobedience are in the air. Siniora, along with Mubarak Awad, head of the Palestinian Center for the Study of Non-Violence, called for a boycott of Israeli cigarettes, to be followed by a boycott of Israeli soft drinks, a refusal to pay taxes and a refusal to work for Israeli employers. Although Palestinians quickly switched from Israeli-made Time to Arab-made Imperial cigarettes ("I prefer to burn imperialism," one student told me), many were skeptical that an economic boycott can succeed at present. As Meron Benvenisti, head of the West Bank Data Base Project, points out, "The Palestinians lack an independent economic power base. There is nothing Palestinian to buy. Their entire industrial sector produces $80 million a year." Benvenisti took a different view of mass disobedience. "If they have enough people who will burn their identity cards, like the Jews did under the British, then there will be problems."

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Such actions may be on the horizon. Anonymous pamphlets, signed by the "Palestinian National Leadership" or the "Uprising Committee," have appeared, calling for mass defiance of curfews, searches and arrests. There are strong indications that the prisons are already full.

While most Israelis have rallied behind the harsh suppression of the demonstrations, there are signs of a fresh debate in the major parties on what to do about the territories. Labor Party doves like Abba Eban are complaining that, although the unrest must be stopped, political initiatives aimed at opening talks with the Palestinians must not be delayed. In early December, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres suggested that Israeli troops withdraw and Gaza be demilitarized. On the other hand, an ominous suggestion was made by Micha Goldman, a key Labor activist and Rabin protégé, that Israel should immediately annex those parts of the West Bank that Labor deems nonreturnable. If anything, there was more diversity of opinion being expressed by members of the right-center Likud Party. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who did not support the Camp David peace treaty with Egypt, is now belatedly willing to talk about autonomy for the Palestinians. Other Likud members have spoken about giving back most of the West Bank and Gaza, even of the inevitability of talks with the P.L.O. Still others have called for more deportations and speak openly of "transferring" the Palestinians en masse to Jordan.

As this debate unfolds, and as the November Knesset elections approach, peace groups like Shalom Achshav ("Peace Now"), which calls for returning the territories and opening talks with the Palestinians' representatives, and Yesh Gvul ("There Is a Limit"), which called on Israeli soldiers not to serve in Lebanon and is now doing the same regarding the West Bank and Gaza, are making their views heard. The uprising has brought thousands of Peace Now demonstrators back into the streets, first to protest Sharon's move into the Old City and then to protest the brutal measures taken by the army. Janet Aviad, the group's treasurer, thinks that these events "have created a new reflectiveness in the public about the price of occupation." The fact that Peace Now did not demonstrate against the iron fist policy when it started, however, reveals the group's limitations. "Peace Now is a movement that channels public feelings. It doesn't create them," Aviad explains. Ishai Menuchin, the spokesman for the more militant Yesh Gvul, adds, "They are deep inside the womb of the [Zionist] consensus. But we go to their demonstrations anyway." At the beginning of January, some 160 Yesh Gvul members signed a statement declaring that they would not serve in the occupied territories. So far, two reservists have been imprisoned.

Just as many Israeli Jews have come to forget that the territories are not part of Israel (nearly all refer to the West Bank by its biblical names, Judea and Samaria), so the line between Israeli and Palestinian Arabs is fast disappearing. The general strike in Israel on December 21 by the majority of Israeli Arabs is stunning proof of this change. If anything, Israeli Arabs ought now to be referred to as Palestinian Israelis. Authoritarian measures that are commonplace

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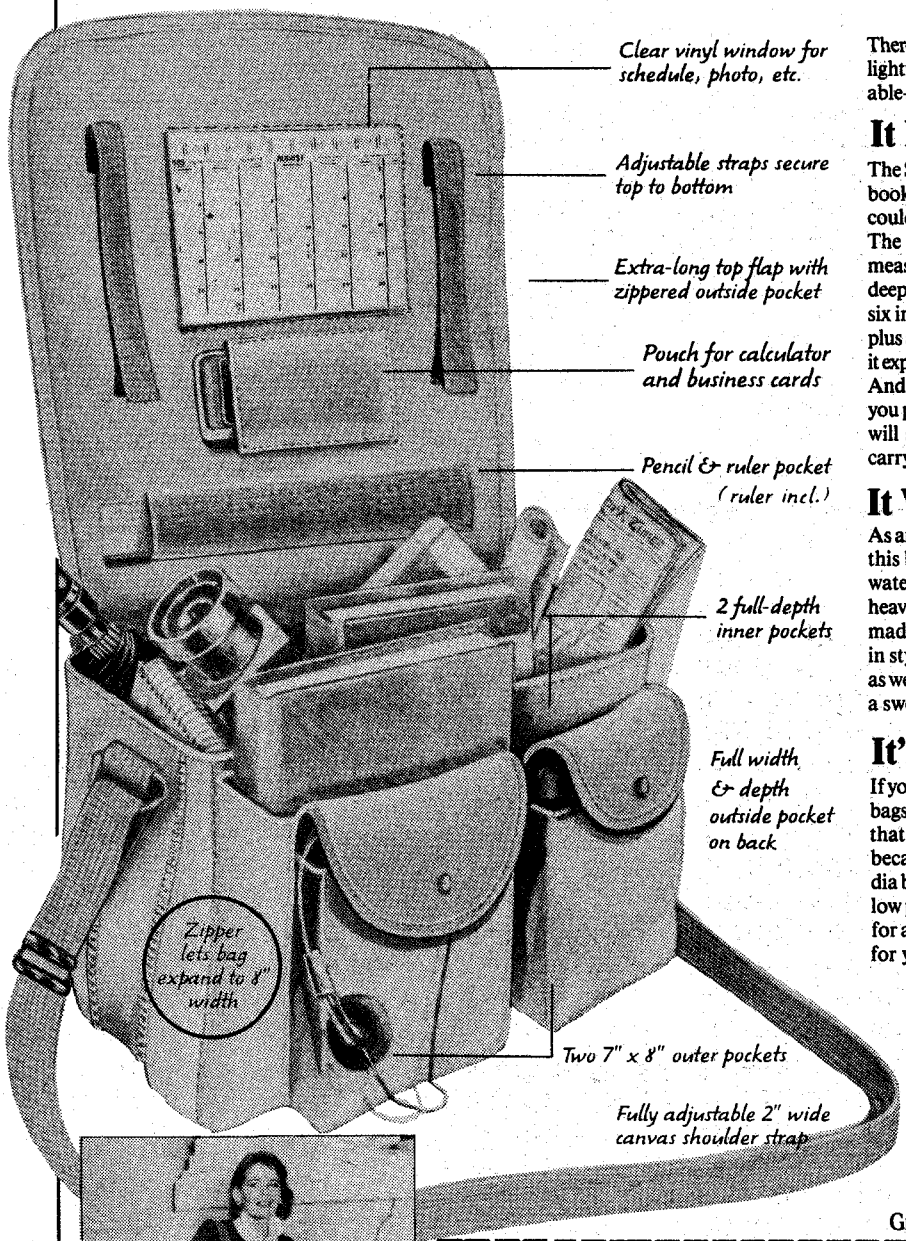
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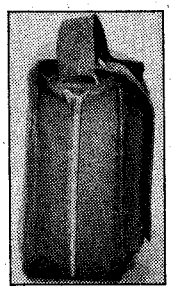

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ISRAEL AND SOUTH AFRICA

Although East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights have been annexed, the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip is still, in legal terms, temporary. However, with more than 1,200 new laws promulgated by the military authorities, more than half the land confiscated and a web of ties created by the presence of 60,000 Jewish settlers, these territories and their 1.4 million inhabitants have been absorbed, though not officially annexed, into Israel. And Israeli rule over this greater Israel is indeed comparable to apartheid rule over the blacks of South Africa:

§ As in South Africa, all inhabitants carry an identity card that labels them by race—in Israel the term used is "nationality"—and is used to restrict their movement. The Israelis also require Arab-owned cars to display a special license plate, of a different color.

§ Like blacks who work outside their homelands, Palestinians are required to have permits to work in Israel proper. In South Africa, some blacks are allowed to live near their workplace; Palestinians must return to the territories each night.

§ Both countries use administrative detention to hold opponents for up to six months without charge. Both also employ torture. Various human rights groups estimate that since the June 1986 state of emergency, 20,000 to 30,000 blacks have been detained in South Africa for varying periods. Since last December, at least 2,000 Palestinians have been arrested and over a hundred administratively detained.

§ In both countries, strict controls are placed on political activity. Meetings of more than three persons require a permit in South Africa; in the occupied territories the number is ten. Palestinians and blacks may be placed under town or house arrest to restrict their movement. Funerals are one of the only forums for public expression allowed in South Africa; in the West Bank and Gaza, the authorities will frequently restrict attendance at funerals to family members.

§ Internal minorities—Israeli Arabs, Indians, coloreds—have voting rights and civil rights, but are consigned to the margins of real political power.

§ There is censorship of both the Palestinian and black presses, and hundreds of books are banned.

§ It is prohibited to meet with or display the symbols of banned or illegal organizations—the African National Congress and Palestine Liberation Organization.

§ In both countries, officials justify military raids against the group that they are at war with as "preemptive strikes against terrorists."

Of course, differences exist as well. In Israel proper, Jews are a large majority. But the longer the occupation remains, the closer Israel comes to being a ***herrenvolk*** democracy, with full rights for one class and limited or no rights for another. M.L.S.

in the territories are seeping into Israel proper. Two Palestinian Israelis were put in administrative detention after the general strike, a step not taken since the early 1960s, when Israeli Arabs were under military rule. One left-wing Israeli news service, News From Within, was shut down for six months, and a bilingual weekly, ***Derech HaNitzotz/Tariq Al-Sharara*** ("Spark"), has been threatened with closure.

While the main struggle between Israelis and Palestinians continues on the ground, in the occupied territories and in pre-1967 Israel, a second struggle is being waged in the court of international opinion and in the diplomatic realm. Both sides see Western media coverage as crucial in this battle. Perhaps the most important field of conflict is in the United States, where open debate among American Jews gave the Reagan Administration the leeway to support a U.N. Security Council resolution condemning the shootings of Palestinian demonstrators at the beginning of January. One Palestinian lawyer told me she thought dissent by American Jews was vital and could at least prevent the Israeli government from taking more extreme measures. The Israelis are concerned about their image abroad and worry that intensified criticism might lead the United States, which subsidizes the Israeli economy with $4 billion in aid each year, to force them to take a more flexible position on talks with the Palestinians. Hence, Yosef Beilin, the Director General of the Foreign Ministry, recently told a largely Jewish audience at the World Zionist Organization in New York City that, while he was for "pluralism in the Jewish community," certain subjects were beyond the pale. He called for a "united Jewish front" to combat irresponsible reporting and denounced those who made comparisons between Israel and South Africa, declaring that this "is not acceptable for Jews to say." But many chilling comparisons exist between Israeli rule over the Palestinians and apartheid [see box at left].

Finally, it is time for Americans to reconsider the policy of not speaking to the P.L.O. Ever since Henry Kissinger promised Prime Minister Rabin in 1975 that the United States would not have any dealings with the P.L.O. unless it renounced terrorism, accepted U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 and recognized Israel's right to exist, Israeli rejectionism has been enshrined in American policy. Last month, for the umpteenth time, Arafat said that he was ready for direct negotiations with Israel in the framework of an international peace conference, that he accepts all relevant U.N. resolutions, including 242 and 338, that he would recognize Israel's right to exist if it accepted the Palestinians' right to self-determination. He told Jonathan Randall of ***The Washington Post*** that "if the Israelis are worried about a small new state, I accept . . . the presence of United Nations forces for any period [on the Palestinian side of the border], not on their side because we do not want to give them any excuse to refuse." If Secretary of State George Shultz can meet with Oliver Tambo, the head of the African National Congress, as he did last winter, why shouldn't he meet with Arafat? If the United States is looking for a real way to restart the peace process, it might begin there. □

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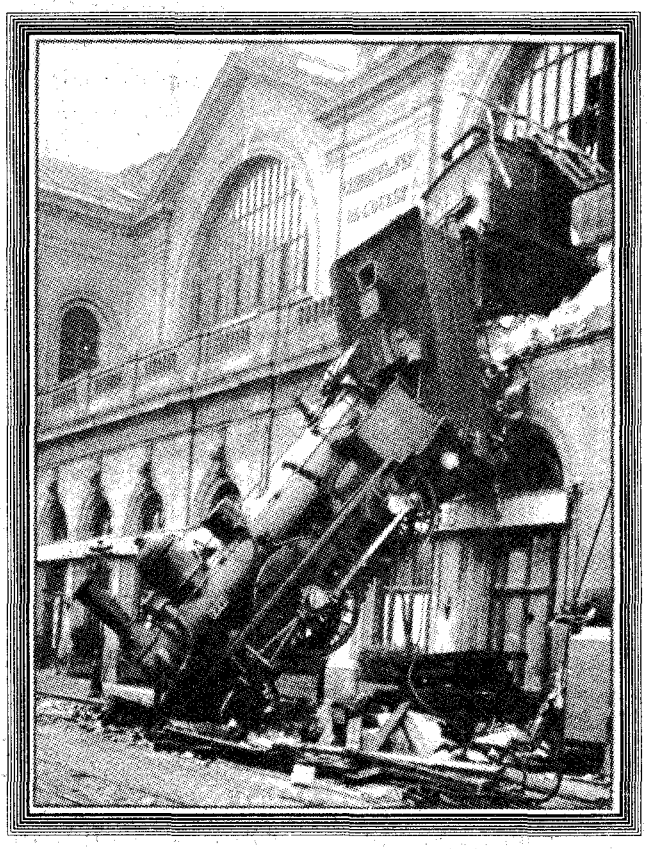

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GAINING GROUND

The New Anti-Poverty Debate

JEFFERSON MORLEY

How does an idea wind up on the political agenda in Washington? Why does one book gather dust in libraries while another becomes a Washington event? *The Truly Disadvantaged*, a recently published book by William Julius Wilson, a well-known sociologist at the University of Chicago, isn't a phenomenon but it isn't gathering dust, either. A revisionist look at the crisis of the black underclass, the book has been warmly praised and it quickly sold out at Washington bookstores.

Wilson's modest success contrasts with the splash made by Charles Murray's *Losing Ground* in early 1985. *Losing Ground*, published at the high tide of Reaganism, was the perfect example of a book as event. Many people had gibed that poverty won the War on Poverty, but Murray went one step further: He argued that the War on Poverty had worsened the plight of the poor. The social programs of the 1960s, he said, encouraged unemployment, welfare dependency, out-of-wedlock marriages and violent crime.

Unlike Murray, Wilson did not have a well-funded public relations machine behind his book. As Chuck Lane reported in March 1985 in *The New Republic*, the Manhattan Institute, a right-wing think tank, arranged a conference devoted to *Losing Ground*. Media commentators stayed at a luxury hotel and received "honoraria" of up to $1,500 each for discussing the plight of the poor.

But hype was not the only reason for Murray's success, as Wilson and others are quick to acknowledge. "Murray forced the liberal community to come back in a more intelligible fashion to some basic issues about poverty that had been left on the side," says Robert Reischauer of the Brookings Institution. As Wilson puts it, Murray "lit a fire" under some comfortable liberal behinds.

In *The Truly Disadvantaged* Wilson argues that liberals have ghettoized the crisis of the ghetto in two ways. They have tended to exaggerate the role of white racism in causing poverty and the effectiveness of affirmative action in alleviating it, and to underestimate the role of the American economy and the effects of class. The result: Liberals have offered neither plausible explanations nor workable solutions for the problems of the black underclass.

Wilson stirred up a minor fuss in 1980 with his succinctly titled *The Declining Significance of Race*. Conservatives claimed him as an ally in their war on affirmative action; liberals said he was playing into conservative hands (thus confirming a lamentable law of ideological politics—the right is looking for converts, the left for heretics). Wilson, in fact, has consistently rejected the blandishments of the right, insisting he is a democratic socialist. *The Truly Disadvantaged* has stirred less of a fuss on this issue, indicating that Wilson's earlier argument that socioeconomic forces were more important than race has become more accepted, even by astute critics like Adolph Reed Jr. [see Reed's review, *The Nation*, February 6].

Wilson's prescriptions will strike most Democratic Party strategists as rather too left-wing. At a time when many defenders of affirmative action are content to wear the Gramm-Rudman straitjacket, Wilson wants to go beyond that remedy and "workfare," the current liberal vogue in poverty policy. He states that the only solution to the crisis of the ghetto is to expand welfare, provide child care and create jobs—for all Americans.

But originality is hardly a guarantee of influence in Washington. David Smith, an economist on Senator Edward Kennedy's staff, says it is premature to judge whether Wilson's book might influence current Congressional efforts to reform the welfare system: "I think it can have an effect, but I don't think it has yet."

Smith says three things are needed to get an idea on the Washington agenda. "First, you need real knowledge, and Wilson has added to our real knowledge of what the problems of the inner city really are."

Bob Greenstein, director of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, notes that Wilson's scholarship is "getting people to recognize that young black men in the ghetto are important. Yes, the welfare mothers are important; that's who the workfare debate is focused on. But these young men are important too, maybe more important."

"Second," Smith says, "you need what I call 'public myth' on your side. There's been a very important shift in public thinking over the last few years. People have gone from viewing the welfare recipient as shiftless and lazy to recognizing that the welfare recipient wants to work and that the system is an obstacle."

Wilson's argument is part of the new public myth. He redefines the "culture of poverty" idea that has gained widespread currency in recent years. He does not dispute that problems like teen-age pregnancy have devastating consequences, but he insists that efforts to change ghetto culture must be based on wider changes in the local economy and not merely on moral uplift. "Culture is a response to social-structural restraints and opportunities," he writes.

Third, Smith says, "You need those seminal dates that make change possible: a new President, a new decade, a new awareness that the issue is how to restore American economic pre-eminence in the 1990s." In other words, a political moment.

"For three or four years," Smith observes, "we've had a serious debate about the nature of America's competitive challenge. Now we have a minimum-wage debate coming up; we have signs of a growing debate around child care and early education. We're no longer debating how to reform the dole. We are talking about rebuilding the link between public assistance and the labor market. Wilson's book will help shape the substance. That will in turn form the political battle lines after 1988."

Wilson has been well received in Democratic circles. He says he has discussed his book with Senator Bill Bradley,

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spent a day with presidential candidate Paul Simon and talked with noncandidate Governor Mario Cuomo. But progressive organizations in Washington sympathetic to the Democratic Party are ill-equipped to advance the ideas of Wilson, or any other social-democratic thinker, onto the political agenda. There are two problems, one organizational and one conceptual.

Organizationally, the most influential civil rights group, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, is symptomatic of the dilemma progressives face. The conference led the successful fights to extend the Voting Rights Act in 1982, to ward off the Reagan Administration's attack on affirmative action and to defeat Robert Bork's nomination to the Supreme Court in 1987. But the benefits of these victories to the black underclass are indirect, to say the least.

As Wilson writes, "Many contemporary problems of race, especially those that engulfed the minority poor, emanate from broader problems of societal organization and therefore cannot be satisfactorily addressed by race-specific programs." Yet Washington organizations dedicated to civil rights are organized almost solely for the purpose of defending and promoting such programs.

The Leadership Conference is emblematic of the wider progressive community in Washington. Each group pursues a fairly narrow agenda and is not organizationally or ideologically linked to like-minded counterparts on other issues.

Lobbyists for the A.F.L.-C.I.O. are mainly pushing Congressional legislation this year that costs no money (meaning measures to preserve the rights of union members). Citizen Action, a federation of statewide populist groups, fights on local issues like toxic waste but has no position on, say, national tax policy. Citizens for Tax Justice promotes progressive tax reform but has no agenda for cutting defense spending. The Center for Defense Information does have such a program but does not take a position on whether the savings should go to social programs. Greenstein's budget center and the Children's Defense Fund protect worthy social programs but can't count on the help of the Leadership Conference. And so on.

Wilson observes in *The Truly Disadvantaged*: "The proliferation of interest groups is not restrained by the requisites of national trade-offs and bargaining, which therefore allows parochial single issues to move to the forefront and thereby exacerbates the advanced condition of political immobilism."

"Immobilism" was one obstacle that did not confront an obscure social scientist named Charles Murray, writing at the high tide of Reaganism. His ideas were cultivated and promoted by the dynamic organizations of the right-wing new class in Washington, what Sidney Blumenthal has dubbed "the counterestablishment."

The deeper problem is conceptual, and both Wilson's argument and progressive middle-class membership organizations reflect that. They tend not to see fundamental ideological conflict at the root of the poverty debate. As Reed notes, Wilson assumes that "the greatest strides in social reform have been made not through conflict and struggle but when liberals and conservatives find common ground." But Murray gained influence precisely by seeking

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to shatter the uneasy liberal consensus around domestic antipoverty programs. Wilson has not gained Murray's prominence because he isn't being read by an ideologically confident political network in Washington.

Greenstein says, "Wilson could have a lot of policy impact in the short term—on what kind of bills get developed. But before you can get there, you need the unions and the black leaders and other groups to build around this kind of agenda. I think Wilson's big point may be most important: that we need a different kind of coalition." □

A FINAL NOTE FROM IOWA

Sioux City Sue's Farm Journal

TIM McGINNIS

Once in a while I can hear the horseshoes clanging in the pits out behind the barn and then the angry voices of Mr. Albert Gore and Mr. Bruce Babbitt arguing about ringers. Things sure were slow around here before all these campaign guys showed up. Now I have to lock myself in my room to get any privacy.

This afternoon's mostly quiet now, though. My brother, Wesley, went fishing with Mr. Gephardt at Porter Creek. Dad is out back turning over the vegetable garden with Governor Dukakis. Ma reckons they'll be finished by dinnertime. So I'll sit here in my room and write in my 4-H notebook. I got a lot of work done on my project last night in the chicken coop. That old beanpole from NBC let me use his big TV lights so I could see how the chicks were doing. It was like the *Today* show and I was the host. I talked into my fist.

"This is Sue Ellen Matson, from outside Sioux City, Iowa, with the daily chicken report." That's just what I said, and Mr. Paul Simon laughed. He was putting the rake away in the toolshed when he saw the lights. I guess he thought that there was another debate in the chicken coop. But it was just me and Emily and Beatrice and Daryl, my star chicks who are going to win first prize at the State Fair next summer in Des Moines.

Although I couldn't really tell the difference between them and the Democrats, Dad said the Republicans made him jumpy, so they didn't stay too long. Why, that Robert Dole never did come into the house. He just slept in his car, and in the mornings Ma would bring out a bowl of hot water so he could shave in the rear-view mirror. He left first.

Then there was Vice President Bush, who used to wash his socks in the sink and always laughed at the wrong places. All I remember about Jack Kemp is that he hogged my hair dryer when he knew I had to catch the 8:30 school bus, and that Southern fella, Pat Robertson, never did cure my Lambsy of her limp. In fact, I think it's worse! Wesley liked General Haig because he got five dollars every night for shining his shoes. General Haig was a strange bird, though.

One night he was pounding down the steps. He had a long-distance phone call and he wanted to take it in the pantry off the kitchen. Well, he slipped on the stair runner and almost broke his neck. But then he got his balance right away, just like an ice skater. He shouted, "Don't worry! I'm in control here!" Dad and Governor Dukakis were in the den watching *Nightline* and I swear they both busted a gut laughing.

So it's pretty entertaining here on the farm. I don't mind these Democrats staying with us. Sometimes they leave and drive around the state, then they come back and complain about sleeping on the cots and the lumpy sofa in the living room, but I know they like it, what with Ma's rhubarb pie and Dad's funny jokes. They've been here for seven months, because I finished with the third grade when they first came here and everybody just got used to them being around every night. Ma hasn't had to clear the table *once* since Easter, and Mr. Gephardt always does the dishes.

One night in June, Wesley arm-wrestled with Mr. Albert Gore and nearly beat him. Mr. Gore said that Wesley was a cornerstone of our strong national defense and then Mr. Babbitt turned down the sound on *Hollywood Squares* and begged Mr. Gore not to talk about his service record again. I was kind of glad he said that because I was growing tired of hearing about it, too. Also, the army talk disturbed me and Reverend Jackson as we were playing a game of Boggle in the parlor.

I like Reverend Jackson, especially when he says, "We're moving from the outhouse to the White House." It makes me think of our outhouse that only Nickles Funsson, our hired hand, uses. For a time there, Mr. Babbitt or Governor Dukakis would take Nickles aside and talk to him about "mandates" and "priorities." They sounded like Miss Wulf, the assistant principal at Will Rogers Elementary. Dad said they were practicing on Nickles for when they talked to regular people.

I've really learned a lot this year. Before Mr. Paul Simon told me otherwise, I thought a caucus was a bug that slept in the earth for seventeen years. Sometimes I miss Mr. Joseph Biden. He taught me the state capitals and how to look up things in the old *World Book*s we got from the widow Mathews. Mr. Biden knew so much. He was always telling me things that great statesmen said in the past. Now we don't get so much as a howdy-do on the phone from him. Not even a postcard.

I'll never forget the night that Reverend Jackson won the limbo contest or how Mr. Gephardt wallpapered the guest bedroom. He didn't even take off his tie and jacket! I'm just happy for the company and the memories—like taking Mr. Gore to "show and tell" at school. (He made a perfect frog with his fingers in the light of the projector.) Or how Governor Dukakis said that we could get price supports for my 4-H Club when I just wanted a ride over there. Every time he told me I was the next generation my head started spinning.

Last night, Wesley showed me in the Rand McNally where New Hampshire was. Wesley was mean to me. He kept going on about how all our boarders were probably

Tim McGinnis's work has appeared in The New Yorker, The Iowa Review *and* Premiere.

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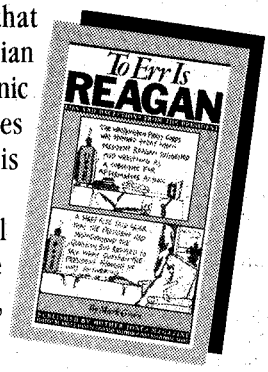

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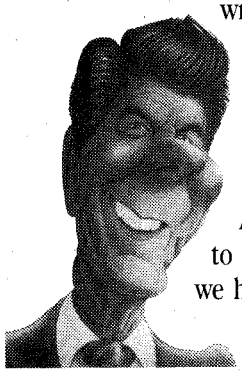

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playing with a little farm girl in New England, that's where some of them went on weekends. I put my hands over my ears. I didn't want to hear that kind of talk. It makes it hard to concentrate on 4-H Club. I reminded Wesley that meant his fishing and arm-wrestling days were over, too. Then Mr. Gephardt made popcorn for everyone and we listened to Reverend Jackson make fun of the white people in the TV commercials. He was a stitch! □

Murdoch

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

after all, in order to win the game, you sometimes have to change the rules. The real question was whether the United States would be another notch on Rupert Murdoch's belt of flimflams. Thus, it was only after significant public interest and Congressional scrutiny, and repeated assurances by Murdoch that he would not seek a permanent change or waiver of the cross-ownership rule, that the F.C.C. approved the transfer of the stations. It conditioned its approval, however, on transition periods, during which he would sell the *Post* (two years) and the *Herald* (eighteen months).

Yet, true to Murdoch's style, almost immediately after his purchases, rumors began circulating in many newspapers that Murdoch would find some way around the cross-ownership rule. *The Wall Street Journal* reported in January 1986 that published remarks by Murdoch and interviews with knowledgeable sources indicated that he would use the waiver time to remove the legal impediment of the cross-ownership rule. The F.C.C. chair at that time—the Duke of Deregulation, Mark Fowler—expressed nothing short of an extremely open mind to this suggestion. There was also talk that the commission would grant a heretofore unprecedented permanent waiver of the rules.

Throughout 1986 and 1987, Murdoch denied he would seek an extension of his waivers or ask for permanent ones. Far into the waiver periods, however, inquiring businessmen were having trouble getting evidence of much interest from Murdoch in selling the two papers. Obviously, the closer it got to the end of his waiver period, the more pressure would be put on the F.C.C. to reconsider his plight.

Murdoch's chances of escaping the cross-ownership rule turned rosy in November of 1987. The so-called Freedom of Expression Foundation, a Washington-based front for the broadcasting and publishing industry (membership and funding are substantially derived from broadcasters and newspaper owners) petitioned the F.C.C. to eliminate or modify the rule. Interestingly, Murdoch's Fox Broadcasting Company is a member of the group and helps finance its $300,000 annual budget. (The organization denied that it undertook the action in the interest of Murdoch or at his request.) Immediately thereafter, the commission asked for comments on the group's petition.

It appeared likely the F.C.C. would launch a full-blown inquiry. Fowler, who by that time had left the commission, stated that it was philosophically inclined to launch just such a proceeding. Recent action by the commission under Fowler's protégé Dennis Patrick (including efforts in 1987 to eliminate other cross-ownership rules) indicated that such a step would undoubtedly be forthcoming. At that point, Murdoch must have felt he was in the catbird seat. As Senator Edward Kennedy would later say, "The fix was in."

The stage was thus set for what has become one of the most written- and talked-about stories of this young year. On December 22, 1987, before Congress adjourned for the year, Senator Ernest Hollings, chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, inserted an amendment into the catchall spending bill barring the F.C.C. from tampering with the cross-ownership rule. It was widely reported that he did this at the urging of Senator Kennedy and with the knowledge and assent of the subcommittee's ranking minority member, Warren Rudman, and the House's corresponding subcommittee chair, Neal Smith, and its ranking minority member, Hal Rogers.

Hollings's action has been billed as a last-second legislative sneak attack by a plethora of newspapers and magazines (including *The New Republic*, *The Washington Post* and *The Wall Street Journal*), by columnists (among them William Safire, a longstanding critic of Murdoch), by members of Congress (Senators Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Alfonse D'Amato, to name but two) and even by Mayor Edward Koch of New York. Amazingly, the Sultan of Sensationalism is being defended by his competition and his critics.

Many of Murdoch's defenders argue that the action was a way for Kennedy to silence the *Herald* and punish Murdoch for his uncomplimentary coverage. Murdoch's own papers, in keeping with a long tradition of an absence of journalistic independence and integrity, led the charge (the *Herald*, for example, ran twelve stories in just three days, coining front-page headlines such as "Kennedy's vendetta").

With the unabating political support Kennedy has in Massachusetts, however, it is unlikely he felt any fear from the *Herald*. Kennedy, Rudman and Hollings's stated concern (that the F.C.C. would bow to Murdoch's interests and repeal the rule) was based on a well-justified mistrust of the commission. As Kennedy commented, "Congress had been burned once by the F.C.C., and Senator Hollings and I were not about to be burned again."

What Kennedy was referring to was the F.C.C.'s backpedaling on the Fairness Doctrine, which required broadcasters to present time for opposing views on issues of public interest. In August 1987 the commission repealed the Fairness Doctrine, even though members of Congress had been promised that would not be done. To add insult to injury, the repeal took place in a public meeting, five minutes

Samuel A. Simon is a Washington, D.C., attorney and former president of the Telecommunications Research and Action Center (TRAC). David Wagenhauser is a staff attorney with TRAC. TRAC, formerly the National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting, strongly opposed the Murdoch request for temporary waivers of the cross-ownership rule in 1986 and is part of a coalition opposing Murdoch's current efforts to obtain a permanent waiver.

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after the F.C.C. announced the results of a Congressionally mandated study of alternatives to the Fairness Doctrine—results Congress was thus never able to consider.

In light of the F.C.C.'s nose-thumbing at Congress on the Fairness Doctrine and of Murdoch's hardly veiled intentions, Kennedy and Hollings knew they had their backs against the wall. "So we took the only practical step available to us," Kennedy said. As Scotty noted from the bridge of the starship Enterprise, "Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me."

The F.C.C.'s cross-ownership rule was enacted in 1975, primarily as a means of promoting diversity of information sources in the media. Contrary to a recent assertion by Mayor Koch in *The Washington Post*, the rule was not aimed at preventing local media monopolies. In the rule-making proceeding leading up to the adoption of the rule the F.C.C. explained its goals: "If our democratic society is to function, nothing can be more important than insuring that there is a free flow of information from as many divergent sources as possible." The commission added that it was "sound public policy" to place the control of these information sources into many, rather than few, hands [see Richard Pollak, page 209].

In a unanimous decision, the Supreme Court upheld the F.C.C.'s action, despite strong protests from newspaper interests. The Justices reaffirmed their position that the public interest standard "invites reference to First Amendment principles . . . and, in particular, to the First Amendment goal of achieving the 'widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources.'"

In his State of the Union Message President Reagan urged the repeal of the cross-ownership rule. Initially, however, most of Murdoch's defenders attacked the Congressional action only because it eliminated any opportunity to obtain waivers this year. When the F.C.C. enacted the cross-ownership rule, it stated that it would grant temporary waivers based on "an inability to sell" the property, a showing that "the only sale possible would have to be at an artificially depressed price," or where "the purposes of the rule would be disserved by divestiture." The commission said it expected those involved to proceed in good faith.

Murdoch's actions have indicated anything but good faith. He purchased the financially plagued *Post* in 1976 and continued to operate it despite losses of over $10 million annually. (At least one source has been reported in *The Wall Street Journal* as saying that Murdoch did not want to lose the *Post* because the paper was the best vehicle for his personal and political interests.)

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While the *Post* has not been considered an incredibly attractive media property, it has not gone unnoticed by potential buyers since Murdoch acquired WNYW-TV. One of the interested parties, Wilbert Tatum, chair and chief executive officer of *The New York Amsterdam News* (a city weekly), told us that after attempting to deal with Murdoch's organization for more than eighteen months, he is convinced that "Murdoch never intended to sell the *Post*." Tatum stated that from almost the day Murdoch received his waiver, he attempted to obtain financial information on the *Post* that would allow him to formulate a bid. Repeated conversations with top Murdoch executives, however, resulted in the same answer—"Not yet." It was not until Christmas Eve 1987 (less than a month from Murdoch's self-imposed deadline for bids) that Tatum finally received the financial information, which he labeled "insufficient." (Tatum did submit a serious bid, which exceeded Murdoch's purchase price of the *Post*, $30 million, by several million dollars.)

Besides Murdoch's unenthusiastic efforts in responding to inquiries in 1986 and 1987, his actions subsequent to the Hollings legislation indicate Murdoch's true intention: to keep the laurel of his media empire intact. This January 14, in response to Hollings's amendment, Murdoch petitioned the F.C.C. to extend new waivers to the cross-ownership rule. Thus, he started the wheels in motion for what will likely be a lengthy court battle. Murdoch was successful in getting a brief reprieve of the divestiture deadline (March 6 for the *Post* and June 30 for the *Herald*); a U.S. Court of Appeals has granted him a forty-five day stay, which begins after it rules on his appeal.

Incredibly, Murdoch indicated in his petition that if the offers weren't high enough or if he did not get an extension, he would shut the doors of the *Post*. Murdoch's apparent blackmail has done little to alienate his newly acquired sympathizers. Mayor Koch, for example, has predicted that closing the *Post* could result in the loss of 1,200 jobs.

Koch, however, was correct when he said it would be a "blow to the entire city" should the *Post* shut its doors. The newspaper, which recently supported Koch in his re-election bid, undeniably adds a divergent viewpoint in the New York area. The fact of the matter, however, is that the *Post* does not have to close. Murdoch, while unenthusiastic in his early attempts to sell it, now reportedly has five potential buyers. This number would undoubtedly be eclipsed by those interested in his New York television station—which he can still choose to sell, if he wants to keep the *Post*.

The issue here is not the forthrightness of Rupert Murdoch or his efforts to become, as Senator Kennedy put it, "the only publisher in America who can buy a television station and obtain an exemption to keep his newspaper under antitrust laws." Rather, it is the principle underlying the cross-ownership rules—the diversity of information sources available to the American public. As the Supreme Court said in 1978 in affirming this F.C.C. position, "Even a small gain in diversity [is] worth pursuing." Yes, fifty-one voices are better than fifty, even if the fifty-first is Rupert Murdoch's—as long as he doesn't have two each in New York and Boston. ☐

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Nothing Wilde

ED COHEN

OSCAR WILDE. *By Richard Ellmann. Alfred A. Knopf. 630 pp. $24.95.*

Although Oscar Wilde did not live out the first year of this century, his name continues to appear wherever sexual relations between men are described. To cite just one notable recent example: In its front-page coverage of last October's March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, *The Washington Post* characterized the gathering of over 500,000 people by saying, "Yesterday's rally would have astounded Oscar Wilde, the nineteenth century author and playwright once jailed for engaging in what he called 'the love that dared not speak its name.'" This single, not quite accurate historical allusion leaps out of an article otherwise devoted to reporting "the facts" about one of the largest political actions in the United States in recent years. For, rather than being just superfluous detail, the reference to Wilde situates the march within a historical narrative that implicitly juxtaposes the supposed "repression" of the Victorian past—so eloquently evoked by Wilde's imprisonment—to the apparent sexual "freedom" of the contemporary American present, implicitly affirmed by the demonstration itself. Thus, in the *Post*'s story, Wilde's life, especially his conviction, acts as an important historical reference point for representing contemporary gay experience: It allows the paper to allude obliquely to the ongoing sexual oppression against which the march was mobilized, while simultaneously consigning such manifest discrimination to the seemingly distant past.

Given the effectiveness of this rhetorical strategy, it is hardly surprising that ever since his trials, and indeed even before them, using Wilde's name has been one of the most popular means of referring to sexual relations between men. Indeed, it has often served as a metonym for the participants themselves. During the first decades of the twentieth century the name "Oscar" was not only a popular homophobic epithet in England's working-class neighborhoods but also provided the eponymous hero of E.M. Forster's novel *Maurice* with a way of identifying his own experience: "I'm an unspeakable of the Oscar Wilde sort."

To a large extent, Wilde's position as the paradigmatic "homosexual" emerged from the proliferation of newsprint that made his trials among the most widely publicized legal proceedings of the nineteenth century. Newspapers throughout the world covered the sex scandal in lurid detail, portraying the popular West End playwright much as they had earlier portrayed his most famous character, Dorian Gray: as a corrupter of innocent youth who mercilessly dragged numerous vital young men down into the cesspools of London's underworld. Yet, while the press coverage was obviously catering to and at the same time creating a prurient public interest in Wilde's sexual practices, the production of Oscar Wilde as the pre-eminent example of sexual deviance was also part of a larger transformation in late Victorian social—and especially sexual—meanings.

In particular, the last decades of the nineteenth century saw the emergence of an opposition that has become so accepted it now defines the "natural" range of sexual expression—i.e., the opposition between "heterosexual" and "homosexual." Making their first significant appearance in the English language only three years before Wilde's conviction (in the 1892 translation of Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis*), these words have always been much more than scientific descriptions of sexual practices. Even in its initial usage, "homosexual" was defined exclusively as the absence of a "natural reproductive instinct" directed toward the opposite sex, while "heterosexual" was coined by analogy to denote the "healthy" result that medical treatment should produce in such a "pathological" male. In this schema, sexual desire for someone of the same sex could only be seen as a substitution for the real thing; "homosexual" came to imply a type of man—e.g., Wilde—who negated normal "sexual instinct"; conversely, "heterosexual" redeemed this pathological type by confirming the "naturalness" of the sexual norm.

Prior to this dichotomous conceptualization, sexual practices between men were usually understood as "sodomy"—a category deriving from ecclesiastical law that referred exclusively to a particular kind of sexual act whether "committed with mankind or beast." Since sodomy was never conceived of as the antithesis of any normative sexual standard, it was perceived to be a ubiquitous, nonprocreative possibility resulting from the inherent sinfulness of human nature. While the transition from the ecclesiastical crime of "sodomy" to the medico-legal category of "homosexual" took place through more than 300 years of medical, legal, religious and moral writing, the results of this shift were made most tangible only during Wilde's lifetime. It was in 1861, fewer than ten years after Wilde's birth, that sodomy was finally removed from the British list of capital crimes, and a mere twenty-five years later that the Criminal Law Amendment Act created the first non-religious category for such sexual offenses, labeling them "acts of gross indecency with another male person." It was under this statute that in 1895 Wilde was tried, convicted and sentenced to two years' hard labor, becoming the most famous example—if not the literal embodiment—of the new definition.

Unfortunately, it is this historical context for Wilde's life and labors that Richard Ellmann's compendious and somewhat overwrought biography systematically neglects. Like his earlier, much-renowned account of Wilde's fellow Irishman James Joyce, this new Ellmann narrative never moves beyond the conventional hagiographic style accorded to the standard biographies of "great literary men." Ellmann begins at the beginning, with the genealogies of Wilde's somewhat eccentric parents, Sir William and Lady Jane (Speranza) Wilde, and ends with Wilde's end, debt-ridden in a third-rate Paris hotel. In between, we are treated to the chronicle—in meticulous if sometimes baroque detail—of the precarious rise and precipitous fall of a Victorian cultural icon. The plot is fundamentally the same one that has been repeated ever since Wilde's death, in a multitude of forms—most notably in the works of British historian H. Montgomery Hyde, who has made a virtual industry out of it.

Ellmann, by following the old tale quite closely, adds very little to this story. His contribution lies mainly in the detailed attention he brings to the individual episodes and the tenacious-

Ed Cohen is a teacher and writer who is currently finishing a book, Talk on the Wilde Side: Towards a Genealogy of the Discourse on Male Sexuality.

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ness with which he pursues the minutiae of Wilde's writings, both public and private. Since it is ostensibly a literary biography, Ellmann's *Oscar Wilde* attempts to situate those writings within the "tragedy" of Wilde's life. The section headings ("Beginnings," "Advances," "Exaltations," "Disgrace," "Exile") lay out in no uncertain terms the trajectory of his interpretation. Wilde's life and his writings are to be read backward, so that the infamy of his "doom" retrospectively provides a framework that imbues all his earlier actions with meaning. Yet given the specifically sexual nature of Wilde's "disgrace," it seems highly ironic that questions concerning the relation between his sexual and textual practices are never explicitly asked, so that their very visible absence effectively circumscribes Ellmann's analysis.

Under the heading "First Words," the biography opens with an interesting conjunction: "Oscar Wilde first emerges for us into articulate being in 1868, when he was thirteen." Hardly referring to Wilde's first words in any literal sense, this sentence brings together the emergence of his life as a writer with his life as a sexual actor (here as a pubescent male) as if to prefigure the collision between the two, which will precipitate the book's denouement 500 pages later. But even as it appears to evoke this connection in order to understand the particularity of Wilde's experience as a late-nineteenth-century writer, the biography swiftly veers away from such an analysis, leaving only the most banal of texts. That first sentence concludes, "in a letter he wrote to his mother from school." This deviation establishes the pattern for Ellmann's version of Wilde; the evocation of Wilde's engagement as a sexual actor is continually displaced onto obsessive accounts of his verbal creations, suggesting that they were mutually exclusive arenas of experience.

As he chronicles Wilde's early career in London, Ellmann meticulously attends to the details of Wilde's self-production both as a person and as a persona, but fails to comprehend the implications of this process. For even as Wilde assiduously sought to parlay his academic association with Aestheticism into a source of income by popularizing its tenets as cultural commentary and then repackaging them as his own with panache, he was entering into a contradictory relationship with the culture upon which he was dependent. Uniquely combining a quick wit, a keen eye and a highly developed sense of personal style, the young Wilde rapidly became a prominent fixture on London's art scene. He was almost immediately apotheosized as the consummate aesthete, and this image proliferated in the pages of the popular press. Throughout the last decades of the nineteenth century Wilde appeared repeatedly as character and caricature; for example, in an 1881 *Punch* cartoon, Wilde's face was superimposed on the head of a sunflower—an iconic representation of decadence—with the caption, "Aesthete of Aesthetes!/What's in a name?/The poet is *Wilde*,/But his poetry's tame." And when Gilbert and Sullivan's comic opera *Patience* appeared the same year, Wilde was unmistakably identified as the living embodiment of its parodic protagonists, becoming, in the words of the libretto, the effeminate male artist, "in the high aesthetic line."

This satirical association, however, also led to Wilde's first big commercial break. For, when *Patience*'s producer, Richard D'Oyly Carte, sought to transfer the operetta from the British to the American stage, he hired Wilde to precede the show in order to introduce the American public to the aesthetic image upon which its humor depended. Wearing his hair long and his trousers short, Wilde toured the continent, lecturing first on "The English Renaissance" and later adding "The House Beautiful" and "The Decorative Arts." But more than his words, it was Wilde's image that captivated his audience and ultimately made his name. By carefully constructing a costume out of "a dark purple sack coat, and knee britches; black hose, low shoes with bright buckles . . . [and] a frill of rich lace at the wrists," Wilde created himself as a personality in opposition to the standards for proper male deportment and challenged those who saw him to assimilate his elaborate self-presentation along with his message about art.

Not surprisingly, this theatricalization was difficult for many American men to accept. Although Wilde was very popular (as his inclusion in the advertising promotions of the period suggests), he was also subjected to various forms of ridicule. His appearance inspired a group of Harvard undergraduates to attempt to upstage him by donning imitations of his costume. He similarly incited fellow author Henry James to spirited verbal—if not sartorial—disapprobation. In commenting on James's response, Ellmann betrays his own difficulty with Wilde's role: "For the tolerance of deviation, or ignorance of it, were alike in jeopardy because of Wilde's flouting and flaunting. James's homosexuality was latent, Wilde's was patent." Unfortunately, besides the factual inaccuracy (by Ellmann's own account Wilde would not engage in his first sexual relation with another man until 1886, so his "homosexuality" could hardly be "patent") and psychobiographical projection (James's "latency" is far from self-evident), this assessment fails to comprehend the complex issues Wilde raised. Far from merely "flouting and flaunting" an already recognizable form of sexual "deviation," Wilde's persona called into question the criteria by which representations of "the normal" could be known. His advocacy of art in conjunction with his own "aesthetic of existence"—to borrow a phrase from Michel Foucault—situated Wilde's performance as an engaged critique of the very bourgeois standards that legitimated such distinctions, and thereby opened up a new space from which he could begin to re-evaluate his relationships with both men and women.

In Ellmann's account, however, Wilde's life is not radical but "disguised"—hidden by the various "masks" that he self-consciously donned throughout his life and, more important, by the mask of modernity itself. Placing him in a progression that moves from Blake, to Nietzsche, to Freud, Ellmann elides the specificity of Wilde's biography, so that it becomes a parable for the modern condition:

> As our conflicting impulses coincide, as our repressed feelings vie with our expressed ones, as our solid views disclose unexpected striations, we are all secret dramatists. In this light Wilde's works become exercises in self-criticism as well as pleas for tolerance.

Here the universalizing (i.e., white, middle-class, straight male) "we" of Ellmann's narrative voice masks the particularity of Wilde's contradictions. Rather than working to understand the complexity of Wilde's position as a married father of two, who engaged in sexual relations with other men even as he was attempting to earn his (quite substantial) income as a popular playwright and critic, Ellmann reduces Wilde's texts to "exercises in self-criticism" or "pleas for tolerance." In so doing he excludes the possibility of exploring the ways in which Wilde produced representations of male experience—both for himself and for his readers—that allowed a questioning of normative sexual standards.

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Considering the subject matter of Wilde's most memorable works this is a serious omission indeed. Although Wilde had been writing poetry, plays and criticism throughout the 1880s, it was not until 1890, with the appearance of his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, followed by his essays "The Critic as Artist" and "The Soul of Man Under Socialism," that his marks on the page rivaled his appearance on the stage. And true to Wilde's reputation, these works, and especially *Dorian Gray*, soon became a *succès de scandale*: The issue of *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* in which the novel first appeared was banned from sale by the British newsdealer W.H. Smith's, and the reviews, replete with such adjectives as "unclean," "effeminate," "theatrical," "unnatural" and "perverted," linked the book to the Cleveland Street Affair (a sexual scandal that had occurred the previous year, implicating several aristocratic men in sexual acts with young male postal employees). Yet even while his contemporaries were busy abhorring the "decadent" implications of his prose, Wilde's dramas were making them laugh at the very standards he was accused of violating.

Between 1892 and 1895 four of Wilde's comedies—*Lady Windermere's Fan*, *A Woman of No Importance*, *An Ideal Husband* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*—appeared to much acclaim in the theaters of London's West End. Since these plays all derive their dramatic structure, if not their humor, from the complications that ensue when middle-class marriage and familial traditions are violated, they both mock the moral codes that justify these traditions and simultaneously, through the resolution allowed by laughter, tacitly reaffirm the "natural order." This paradox, reiterated in the memorably ironic bons mots for which the comedies are famous, confirms André Gide's assertion that Wilde's "most disturbing ironies were designed to bring the two ethics face to face. . . . I mean pagan naturalism and Christian idealism, and to put the latter out of countenance." For, inasmuch as Wilde's own life shuttled between two morally charged locations—the family home in Tite Street and the hotel rooms in which he received his male lovers—his writing seems to articulate this divided experience by raising the ironic contradictions of middle-class respectability to new aesthetic and comic heights.

Yet Ellmann seems unaware of the poignancy and the courage of Wilde's

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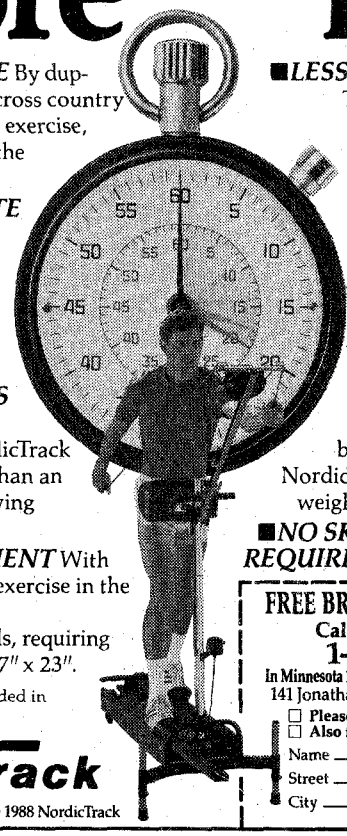

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double life, so that his biography excludes the painful indeterminacy that Wilde both lived and evoked. The implications of this exclusion are made most apparent in Ellmann's description of what is purported to be Wilde's first sexual encounter with another man:

> He was well aware of the dangers of being homosexual, though he had consorted freely with those who were. His delight in young male bodies and in intense friendships with men was patent. Yet he had till now managed not to commit himself about physical as once about spiritual things. This was his state of mind when he met Robert Ross at Oxford in 1886.

Not only is Ellmann's anachronistic use of "homosexual" here factually incorrect (i.e., the term would not even enter English usage for another six years) but the "dangers" associated with "being" it cannot possibly account for Wilde's "state of mind." By juxtaposing things "physical" and "spiritual," Ellmann frames Wilde's relationship with Robbie Ross as a conversion experience, effectively establishing a radical discontinuity between Wilde's earlier sexual relations with women and his emerging sexual desires for men. In so doing, Ellmann accepts the dichotomization of male sexual desire into an opposition between "hetero" and "homo" and then projects this opposition back onto Wilde's experience even *avant la lettre*: "Now that he was firmly homosexual, he wondered if he had always been so."

The problem with this interpretation is not primarily semantic or historical (although it is, of course, both) but political. While Ellmann's biography deserves much praise for its patient scholarship and concern for its subject, it nevertheless situates Wilde both in and against the "great male" tradition that he himself sought to interrupt. As a result, Ellmann is forced to offer what is tantamount to an apology for Wilde's behavior, suggesting that Wilde's personal/psychological idiosyncracies were the cause of his victimization by the British legal system: "That Wilde anticipated the results of his actions is unlikely, though his sense of doom had been present since childhood." Unfortunately, this individualizing approach circumvents the larger issues that Wilde consistently raised both in his life and his writing. His self-creation and self-marketing as a public figure were explicitly designed to call into question not just the particular middle-class values and life styles he found so stultifying but also the increasingly powerful role that such normative practices had upon the lives of individuals across the social spectrum.

By focusing on Wilde as a unique if not anomalous personality, Ellmann directs our attention away from the social and historical stage upon which Wilde acted out his greatest drama—that is, his life—and thereby fails to comprehend the ways in which Wilde's behavior was an explicitly political challenge to the hegemony of the late Victorian middle class. This failure overwhelms the enormous biographical and bibliographical detail that Ellmann brings to *Oscar Wilde* and reduces the book to a plodding and often dull account of what can ultimately be read only as a story of Wilde's self-destruction. In this academic version of blaming the victim, Ellmann implicitly reiterates the condemnations heaped upon Wilde during his lifetime—albeit in a more liberal and "tolerant" fashion—and thus confines Wilde, once again, to the margins of history. Yet if we are ever to appreciate fully the enormous courage and creativity that Wilde embodied, we must move beyond this individualizing perspective and begin to consider Wilde, as he considered himself, in the context of his historical importance. □

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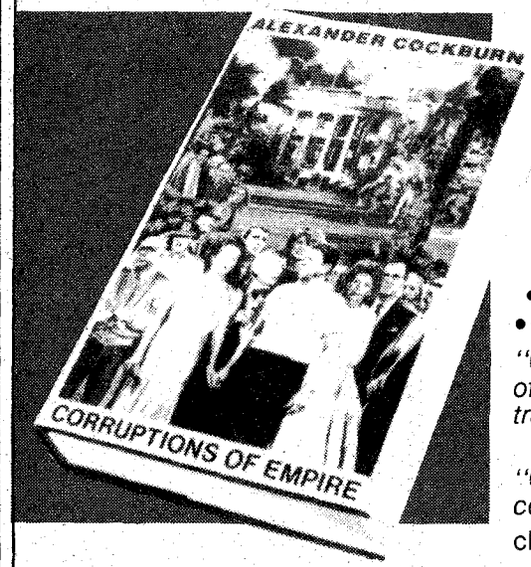

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Pat on the Head

SARA DIAMOND

PAT ROBERTSON: A Personal, Political and Religious Portrait. *By David Edwin Harrell Jr. Harper & Row. 260 pp. $15.95.*

It's not surprising that a campaign biography of Pat Robertson—timed for release at the start of the 1988 primaries—should distort the candidate's political career. But it is a little shocking to find that this extended puff comes not from the public relations offices of Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network but from a respected scholar of religion, David Edwin Harrell Jr., chair of the history department at the University of Alabama. Harrell has written extensively on the charismatic Christian movement. His *All Things Are Possible* is one of the few thorough treatments of the religious revival that followed World War II and served as a forerunner to the born-again Christian movement now staking its claim in American politics. He is also the author of the definitive biography of Oral Roberts.

Harrell's latest book, *Pat Robertson*, subtitled *A Personal, Political and Religious Portrait*, does shed some light on Robertson's family background and on the theological roots of his apocalyptic world view. We get a vivid picture of the fervor with which Robertson, as a young convert, embarked in 1959 on the creation of the world's first noncommercial religious television station, much to the delight of his deeply religious mother and, initially, much to the chagrin of his pragmatist father, Virginia's late Senator Willis Robertson. The details here are often new and useful.

As a seemingly objective political biography, however, the book is something else again. There is virtually no mention of Robertson's ties with government leaders here and abroad; very little space is given to the role his CBN has played in forging the powerful charismatic voting bloc he now expects to mobilize; nor is there a hint of Robertson's pattern of support for U.S. counterinsurgency operations in the world's major hot spots. At the minimum, Harrell should have mentioned the following matters:

§ Robertson has been a major player in Central America. In 1982 and 1983 he funneled aid to Guatemala's born-again dictator, Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt, under whose tenure the Guatemalan military massacred thousands of Quiché Indians. In 1985 CBN established a medical clinic in the Nebaj region of northwestern Guatemala, in conjunction with the Florida-based Air Commandos Association. The clinic was part of the Guatemalan government's counterinsurgency plan to construct "strategic hamlets" to isolate Quichés from the leftist insurgent fighters they might otherwise support.

In May 1985, Robertson held a telethon on his *700 Club* program to raise money for the *contras* and for Guatemala's then-dictator Gen. Mejía Víctores. That June, Robertson personally delivered more than $1 million worth of matériel to Mejía Víctores. That same month *The Miami Herald* reported that CBN was the largest single private donor to the *contras*; official figures varied, citing between $3 million and $7 million going to the *contras* and their families in Honduras.

Throughout 1984 and 1985—long before the Jim Bakker–PTL scandal and Robertson's presidential campaign captured the attention of the mainstream press—Robertson was using his *700 Club* to mobilize the faithful to lobby Congress for more military aid to the *contras* and the Salvadoran government. His incessant propaganda on behalf of the Reagan agenda for Central America included a segment lauding the "charisma" of Roberto d'Aubuisson, head of El Salvador's fascist ARENA Party, and with cameo appearances by *contra* leaders Adolfo Calero, Enrique Bermudez and Steadman Fagoth. Both before and during his presidential campaign, Robertson has repeatedly called for an armed U.S. invasion of Nicaragua.

§ Robertson has long been an ardent supporter of the South African government. Both before and after he turned the job of *700 Club* host over to his son Tim last August, the program habitually characterized the African National Congress as a band of Soviet-inspired killers and tried to persuade viewers to oppose economic sanctions against the apartheid regime. In December 1987 CBN reporter Kathy Sindorf presented a series on South Africa in which she described the place as "a wonderful, progressive country."

§ Robertson's political campaign itself is currently under investigation by the Internal Revenue Service. Back in 1980, Robertson began the Freedom Council, whose director, Ted Panteleo, was said to be organizing in every Congressional district toward "a Christian President and a Christian government." Money raised using the Freedom Council's special tax status (501 c 3, for nonprofit organizations whose funds are not to be used for political purposes) appears to have gone into Robertson's campaign coffers. The result is that Robertson has some $11 million, enough to help him outspend the other Republican candidates and to insure him some impressive successes: In May 1986 he upset G.O.P. politics-as-usual in Michigan by winning about as many delegates as George Bush; in September 1987 he won a straw poll in Iowa; in November he came in second in a Florida G.O.P. straw poll; and in December he won 83 percent in a Virginia Republican straw poll.

§ An unknown number of Robertson's campaign foot soldiers come from nondenominational charismatic churches in the "shepherding" movement, where strict obedience to their pastors' mandates is required. At their most benign, shepherding pastors usually require "sheep" to report all the personal details of their lives and to receive permission before dating or marrying; in worse cases pastors have ordered parents to "train" their children by using heavy doses of corporal punishment. Harrell ignores the more authoritarian and cultlike aspects of Robertson's workers, although he is obviously familiar with the problem. In this book he refers to information from a 1980 *Christianity Today* article that reported on Robertson's disavowal of the shepherding ministers. Some of these same men are now front and center in the Robertson campaign.

Sara Diamond, a graduate student in sociology at the University of California, Berkeley, has been monitoring the Christian Broadcasting Network since 1983 and is currently writing a book on the politics of the Christian right.

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Harrell seems to think that shepherding has died a quiet death, but nothing could be further from the truth. Cult-watching organizations continue to receive regular reports of "sheep" within CBN-affiliated shepherding churches who suffer psychological abuse from their leaders, many of whom are campaigning for Robertson. Harrell's neglect of this important social/theological issue is inexcusable. Even *The Wall Street Journal* has recognized the political and organizational extremism of the Maranatha shepherding group, one of whose members is CBN's national security reporter and a semiregular co-host on *700 Club*.

Harrell does have a useful chapter on evangelicals in which he disentangles some of the confusing theological threads within the charismatic movement. He points out quite accurately that Robertson is not an advocate of the Armageddon "pre-tribulation rapture" theology that Jerry Falwell and Jimmy Swaggart use to justify global nuclear war. Instead, Robertson places himself in the camp of a "post-tribulation premillennialist." This means that his reading of Revelations leads him to conclude that he and other Christians will have to experience a seven-year period of war and economic and natural disasters prior to the second coming of Christ. After that, Robertson expects that "believers" will "rule and reign" over the earth with Jesus for a thousand years. The point to note here is that by taking an ambiguous position on key theological issues, Robertson more than any other born-again leader has successfully smoothed out conflicts that kept fundamentalists and pentecostals divided and generally apathetic about politics prior to the 1980s.

If Harrell is competent enough to deal with Robertson's complicated religious history, and if he was under no obligation to write an "official" biography, the question remains: Why did he not deal seriously with Robertson's politics just when doing so is most important? "I didn't do the kind of detailed research as I did on Oral [Roberts] because I didn't have time," Harrell told me. When Harrell requested an interview, Robertson's response was to get his public relations officer, G. Benton Miller Jr., to help Harrell locate research materials and to set up interviews with relatives and confidants. For a historian, Harrell's use of sources is bizarre. Aside from a handful of quotes from some of Robertson's direct-mail letters (made available to Harrell by the Oral Roberts University archive), the book is based almost entirely on interviews with members of Robertson's inner circle and on published material carefully excerpted to flatter him.

By way of "balance," Harrell includes a couple of harmless quotes from John Buchanan, director of People for the American Way, but he chose not to interview any of Robertson's real critics, such as the people at *Sojourners*, a progressive Christian magazine, which in October 1985 published a startling exposé of Robertson's assistance to the Nicaraguan *contras*. Harrell told me that *Sojourners* refused to talk to him, a claim that Dennis Marker, *Sojourners*' communications director, adamantly denied, saying that Harrell never contacted the magazine. Harrell writes that Robertson denied *Sojourners*' charges; Marker said that Robertson threatened to sue the magazine before publication of the story; the evangelist still has not challenged its veracity.

In fact, a few months after the *Sojourners* report, Robertson addressed a reception in his honor at a convention of the National Religious Broadcasters. He told me then that he was working with F.D.N. leader Enrique Bermudez and providing Bibles and chaplains to the *contras*. Boasting about his insider's knowledge, he revealed that both Israel and South Africa were assisting the *contras*, and thereby offered the first hint at the South Africa–*contra* connection later revealed to be one of William Casey's closely guarded Central Intelligence Agency secrets.

Ultimately, *Pat Robertson: A Personal, Political and Religious Portrait* is one more example of the media's failure to obtain substantial coverage of the Christian right. They have consistently ignored the movement's considerable political clout while delighting in the trivial antics of a few bizarre characters. Last spring and summer the PTL sex scandal probably generated as much in-depth coverage as the entire movement's activities over the past ten years. Meanwhile, Harrell says, CBN's Benton Miller is now referring inquisitive reporters to Harrell's office for "independent" background information. As for Harrell, his sanitized Robertson story is likely to earn him some money from the born-again crowd and eternal gratitude from the Robertson campaign, which sorely needed a noncontroversial "unofficial" campaign biography. □

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And Then There Was One

RICHARD POLLAK

THE MEDIA MONOPOLY. *By Ben H. Bagdikian. Beacon Press. 274 pp. Paper $10.95.*

As Rupert Murdoch and his hand-wringing allies wrap themselves in the First Amendment and assorted free-press homilies in order to persuade us that the Federal Communications Commission and Congress are picking on poor Rupert unfairly, the new edition of Ben H. Bagdikian's *The Media Monopoly* is a useful book to have around.

Murdoch, who is busy these days building a media barony in the United States to go with those he rules in Australia and Great Britain, would like to hang on to WFXT-TV and the *Herald* in Boston and WNYW-TV and the *Post* in New York City. But a bothersome F.C.C. rule barring cross-ownership requires that he give up either a newspaper or a television station in each city.

This seems altogether reasonable to Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy, who, together with South Carolina Senator Ernest Hollings, engineered legislation that would prohibit the F.C.C. from relaxing the cross-ownership ban or extending temporary waivers like those that were supposed to expire for Murdoch in New York by March 6 and Boston by June 30.

The Murdoch forces accuse Kennedy of seeking revenge for the conservative *Herald*'s noisy opposition to his liberal policies and of sneakily attaching the ban legislation to a catchall spending bill late last December. In New York, Mayor Edward Koch, sometime *Post* columnist and all-time *Post* endorsee, rapped Kennedy for his "underhanded assault." New York Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who desperately needs the *Post*'s backing in his bid for re-election this year, also rallied to Murdoch's side, as did Senator Alfonse D'Amato.

Predictably, most coverage of these events has centered on personalities or has been drenched in crocodile tears about lost jobs. Nowhere could one find a lead that read: "Rupert Murdoch's New America Publishing, one of the twenty-six corporations that now dominate the information and entertainment business in the United States, moved today to reduce media diversity even further by seeking to circumvent the Federal Communications Commission's prohibition against cross-ownership."

When the first edition of *The Media Monopoly* came out in 1983, Ben Bagdikian reported that fifty corporations controlled most of the country's media business. By the time this second edition went to press, the number was down to twenty-nine; by Bagdikian's very recent calculations, the total is now twenty-six, in part due to Murdoch's purchase of book publisher Harper & Row last year.

Bagdikian, a former national editor and ombudsman at *The Washington Post* and soon to retire as dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of California at Berkeley, reports that at the end of World War II, more than 80 percent of the nation's dailies were independently owned. As of 1986, 72 percent were owned by outside corporations and fifteen of those companies had most of the business. The country's twenty-five largest chains control nearly 59 percent of daily newspaper circulation, up from 51 percent in 1976.

In the magazine field, twenty corporations controlled most of the business in 1981; now six hold sway. Murdoch has yet to climb into the magazine leadership, but he is hard at it. His magazine unit now publishes *New York*, the *Star*, *New Woman*, *European Travel & Life*, the U.S. edition of the French fashion magazine *Elle*, and thirteen business periodicals.

Bagdikian lists ten companies as dominating book publishing, among them Simon & Schuster and Random House. Simon & Schuster is owned by the Gulf + Western conglomerate, which also owns Paramount Pictures, one of the four highest-grossing movie companies at the box office. Random House is owned by the Newhouse brothers, who also are among both the fifteen newspaper clout-wielders and the magazine big six.

This trend is duly, even enthusiastically, recorded on the nation's business pages: General Electric buys NBC in a $6.4 billion deal for NBC's parent company, RCA; Capital Cities swallows ABC for $3.5 billion. "NEWSPAPER PROPERTIES HOTTER THAN EVER,"

Richard Pollak is a former literary editor of The Nation*; his most recent book is* The Episode*, a novel (New American Library).*

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trumpets *The New York Times* over a report that dailies in New Haven, Baltimore, Detroit, Dallas, Des Moines and Louisville were gulped down by conglomerates in an eighteen-month binge, for a total of $1.3 billion. (The New York Times Company understands these numbers, being a gulper itself, ranking fifth among media conglomerates, with sales of $1.5 billion in 1986.)

But if the big numbers are news, the social and political consequences of all this conglomeration are not. As Bagdikian writes in the preface to this second edition, "the antidemocratic potential of this emerging corporate control is a black hole in the mainstream media universe." Not surprisingly, that darkness envelopes Bagdikian himself, now that his latest research documents a concentration far worse than before. Enough time has passed since the November 13 publication date of this expanded and updated edition to safely say that the media behemoths he scrutinizes have chosen to ignore him.

They also ignored him when he testified before a House subcommittee last April about, among other media monopoly matters, the "extraordinary" waiver the supine F.C.C. granted Murdoch in 1986 that so far has allowed him to delay any sale in Boston or New York for two years, a stall Murdoch has now prolonged further with court action.

And why shouldn't we fight, bleats the president and chief executive officer of Murdoch's News America Publishing, Martin Singerman, in a letter to *The Times* on January 18. The F.C.C. grandfathered "no fewer than 136 cross-ownership situations" when it instituted the ban in 1975, wrote Singerman, who is particularly pained that those include the New York *Daily News*, whose parent, The Tribune Company (1986 revenues, $2 billion), owns New York's WPIX radio and WPIX-TV, and *The Times* itself, which owns New York radio stations WQXR-AM and -FM. Singerman says that a *Times* editorial on January 6 supporting the ban is downright hypocritical, an insight that should win him the Pulitzer Prize for news analysis.

Meanwhile, consolidation continues apace. Consider, for example, the spectacle now going on in Detroit, where the Gannett Company and Knight-Ridder Inc., the nation's two largest newspaper chains (total revenues, $4.7 billion in 1986) are pleading poverty. These beleaguered giants have been begging the Justice Department for months to let them establish a joint operating agreement (J.O.A.), in which Knight-Ridder's *Free Press* and Gannett's *News* would merge their advertising, circulation and production departments under one roof.

This, of course, would instantly create a newspaper business monopoly in Detroit, but it is all perfectly legal under the exquisitely named Newspaper Preservation Act of 1970. This handy scam exempts publishers from the antitrust laws if they can show that one paper will not survive unless the cost-saving J.O.A. is allowed. Knight-Ridder claims that is the case for its *Free Press*, which the company says lost more than $90 million between 1981 and 1987.

In recent years, the Justice Department has approved J.O.A.s in Anchorage, Cincinnati, Chattanooga and Seattle, bringing the total number of these cozy combines to more than twenty. These arrangements, together with the plain, old-fashioned one-owner monopolies, have left 98 percent of the U.S. cities with daily newspapers without competition. Detroit is the country's fourth largest market in terms of newspaper circulation, and a J.O.A. there would constitute the biggest yet, which so far has led the Justice Department to frown on the request.

Morton Needelman, an administrative law judge and the department's handpicked fact-finder, recently concluded that the papers were not victims of a declining market, as they claimed, but of their own aggressive policies pursued "in the belief that failure, too, had its reward." The battle is far from over, however, since the final decision in the case is up to Attorney General Edwin Meese 3d, a man not unsympathetic to the woes of large corporations.

The high-sounding justification for permitting J.O.A.s to form around the country is that they preserve competing editorial "voices." That is also the rationale for much of the wailing over the *New York Post*, which is also losing money. Nowhere do we find a lead that reads: "Rupert Murdoch and Knight-Ridder may close their papers in New York and Detroit, victims of the free-enterprise market forces their editorials endorsed with such consistency and enthusiasm over the years."

The twaddle about preserving competing editorial voices implies that there already exist some fundamental variations in the political and cultural emanations of the mainstream press. But as Bagdikian demonstrates on page after

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page, and as anyone can tell by traveling the country and sampling the dailies or TV news in town after city, the nation's media march in a lockstep of numbing predictability.

Their defenders insist they have steadily improved over the past twenty-five years or so, and in some ways they have. Reporters are better educated, their standards higher and their paychecks fatter. The profession of journalism is more ethical and sophisticated than in the read-all-about-it days of newsstand hawking, and editors rarely spike individual stories that might offend advertisers. A few newspapers are now also more willing to go after once-sacred cows in their communities (secure in the knowledge that such forays no longer put their own cash cows at risk).

All this Bagdikian concedes. Yet, as he correctly observes,

> American mainstream news is still heavily weighted in favor of corporate values, sometimes blatantly, but more often subtly in routine conventions widely accepted as "objective." One is overdependence on official sources of news. Another is a peculiar lack of social context for facts in the news, which removes much of the meaning. Third is a pattern of selective pursuit that results in some subjects regularly developed in depth and others of equal or greater importance systematically avoided.

Bread-and-circus coverage of Super Bowl XXII drools obscenely out of the media maw, while virtually no news organization stations reporters in Harlem or other ghettos of the nation to produce a sustained portrait of the conditions there.

Bagdikian blames all this, to a great degree, on the power of mass advertising, which seeks more than anything else to reach well-heeled readers and viewers. What keeps this upscale audience in a buying mood are heavy daily doses of personality gossip and soft features in the Home and Living sections on pitfalls to avoid when buying a $350,000 country retreat and offering the latest nuance on barbecuing asparagus for weekend guests.

More and more, Bagdikian points out, newspapers and TV news are aimed at the nation's 210 retail markets, not its 19,000 municipalities. "In California," he writes, "which has more daily papers than any other state, two thirds of [them] have no city name showing on page one." Most papers like these deny readers even the barest coverage they need to make informed political decisions at the local level. In some places, weeklies fill the gap. But few have the resources to do a good job, and many of those that do begin to thrive get snapped up by chains themselves.

In most newspapers, what hard news there is comes in fragmented, oversimplified, easily forgotten bursts; on television the scattershot, of course, is worse. Moreover, the "news" is identical from daily to daily, from network to network, from newsmagazine to newsmagazine:

THE CRUCIFIED

Outside the snowy onion domes of the Greek Orthodox Church
a gilded, brilliant-mosaiced Michael holds up his angry sword.
Above his head, four violet panes of glass
flare like the eyes of God over South Clinton Street
where frozen boys lean on the streetlamps, bare-armed
in all weather, loping from corner to corner
with the stiff, elegant speed of wolves.
Now they take careful aim against the cars;
guarding the second-hand stores and bargain shop boutiques—
antiques for sale, the antiques who sell them, who press
pale faces to the window and look out:

where a young man in a wheelchair is trying to shovel snow.
He rocks back and forth in a gold tee shirt,
scraping Byzantine music along the curb
that spills new-melted silver to the street.
Behind him, Jesus in stone is hanging crucified.
He looks so young and naked in his snowy rags,
his arms stretched painfully out, for all the world
like a kid making snow angels in thin air.

Liz Rosenberg

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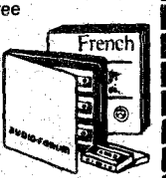

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the same layouts, the same lead stories, the same tired formula writing, the same pictures, the same blow-dried anchors. As A.J. Liebling conjugated some twenty-five years ago, our press is "monovocal, monopolistic, monocular."

Muckrakers occasionally sally forth, but they seldom challenge the accepted political norms of the society. Instead, they are content to hoe at the heels of political bagmen and assorted other wrongdoers and then drop the story once the trial ends. A few of the largely male, white, middle-class journalists who populate the nation's newsrooms recognize that there is more to investigative journalism than this, and still fewer produce thoughtful reporting from time to time (notably in *The Wall Street Journal* and on National Public Radio). But most go on turning out homogenized pap, knowing that if they insist on new approaches to the news or merely protest too loudly they'll wind up writing obituaries or out of a job.

In Bagdikian's ideal media world, a person or corporation could control one local newspaper monopoly and would be free to try and start, but not buy, others. Likewise for broadcast stations. Cross-ownership also would be strictly limited. In addition, Bagdikian calls for a progressive tax on advertising and lowered postal rates for publications that carry little or no advertising. But he has no illusions about these and the other reforms he proposes in his final chapter. He sets them down dutifully, not optimistically.

In his first chapter, he quotes Robert Maxwell, the British press lord, as saying in 1984: "In ten years' time there will be only ten global corporations of communications. I . . . would expect to be one of them." Maxwell is a leading bidder to buy the *New York Post* from Murdoch. So is Leonard Stern, the pet products king who owns New York's *Village Voice*, which Murdoch sold to him in 1986. It's a small club and getting smaller. □

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MIKE LOGAN call Nina, will go west.

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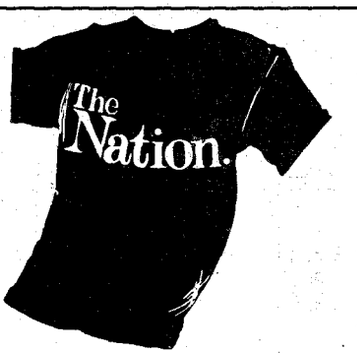

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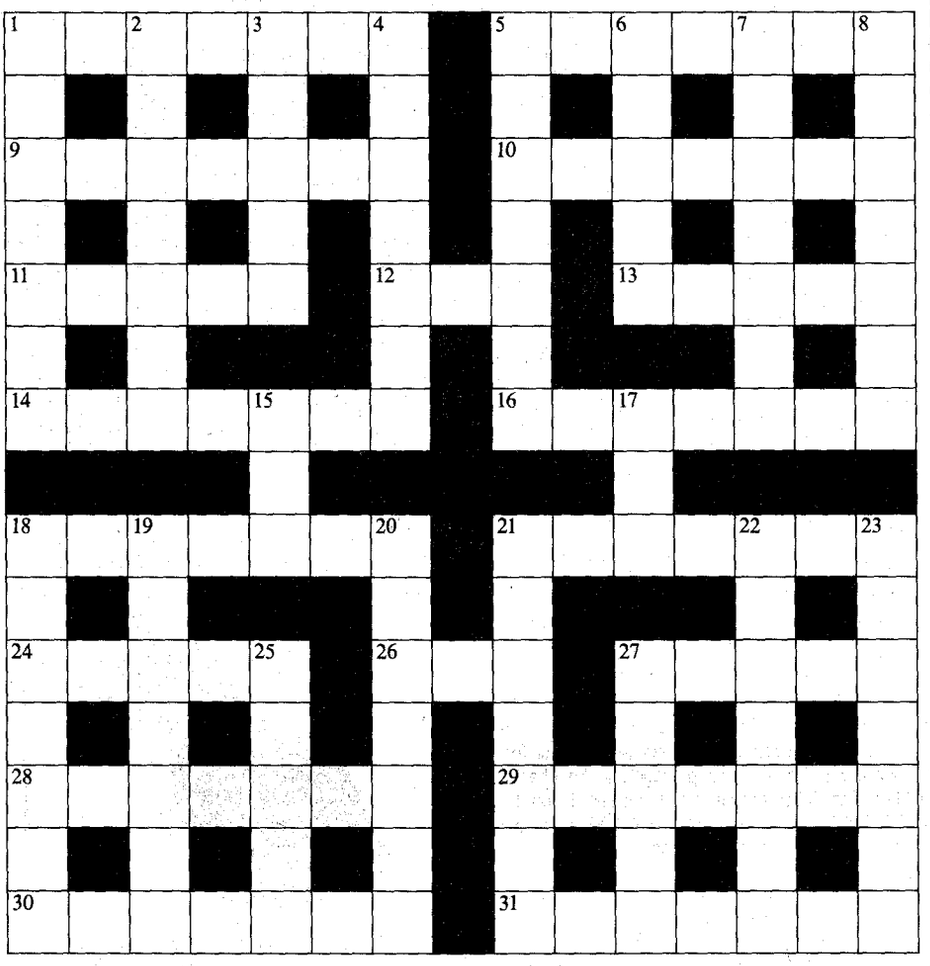


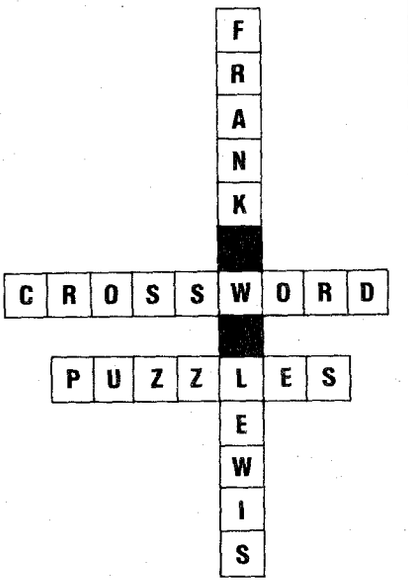
ACROSS

1 Youthful encouragement? (Show me the home around it, for the old song of inebriation.) (3,2,2)
5 and 3 down Proving the inaccuracy of Donne's statement—but we might think of it as the cat's home. (3,4,2,3)
9 Real trouble around a friend overseas, or in Wyoming! (7)
10 Final freedom to some, with a rainstorm around the camper, perhaps. (7)
11 New coins for the offspring? (5)
12 and 17 down Is this what indirectly caused Cleo's death, as we might hope? (6)
13 One way to perplex you with what remains from the old trunk. (5)
14 Adipose, I begin to presume, being what might make you tired. (7)
16 An expression of disapproval made by the harsh and forbidding Rickenbacker, perhaps. (7)
18 and 21 A potential helper might tell you to come up with an answer to the clue. (4,3,3,4)
24 But you don't make things all square when you stand for one at the bar. (5)
26 See 15 down
27 Sad and gloomy, as the poet says, with a number at the back. (5)
28 Taxi I catch when seeing the Secretary of State, etc. (7)
29 Plain paper is so like an anarchistic place. (7)
30 A Roman's galley slave, possibly. (7)
31 Sort of sees around the top, and gets away. (7)

DOWN

1 and 18 Classic tumblers? (5,2,7)
2 If the old one was associated with a white rose, would a new one suggest the Apple? (7)
3 See 5 across
4 Spin or weave to impress one mightily! (7)
5 Pulled up by the decamper? (4,3)
6 Are these reputedly belted? (If they started quietly, they would be real gems!) (5)
7 Is Saul confused about his head covering? (It may be connected with arms.) (7)
8 No longer plentiful as a model? (7)
15 and 26 across D'Artagnan was one to provide fuel to study. (6)
17 See 12 across
18 See 1 down
19 What's the point to an elephant walk—possibly to take a nap? (7)
20 Chinese money kept around the house pet in Mexico? (7)
21 Quite a lot of weight, certain to be on many clerics. (7)
22 Where the napkin might be put suggests what shingles do. (7)
23 A colorful get-up on an important day for Caesar makes a certain amount of fun of this. (7)
25 What certain youthful clothes might be made of? (Gold is coming up!) (5)
27 A column might have such style. (5)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT



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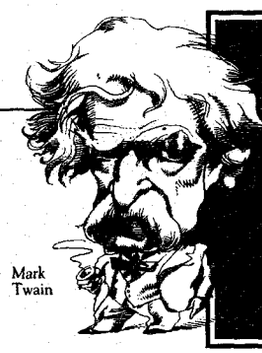

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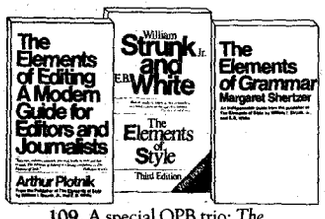
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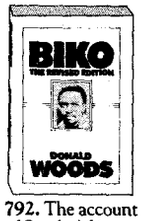

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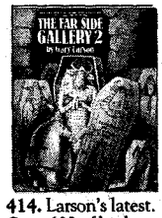

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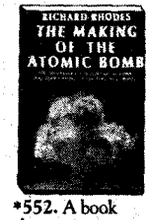

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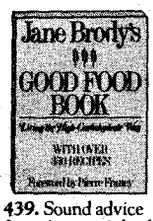

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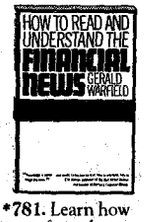

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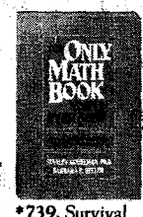

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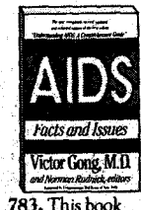

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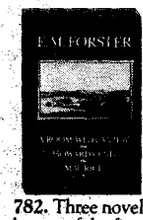

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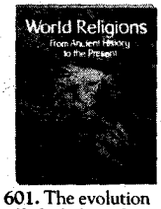

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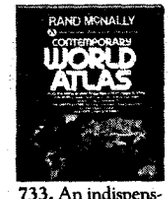

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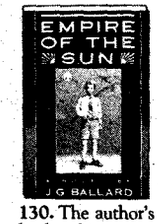

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